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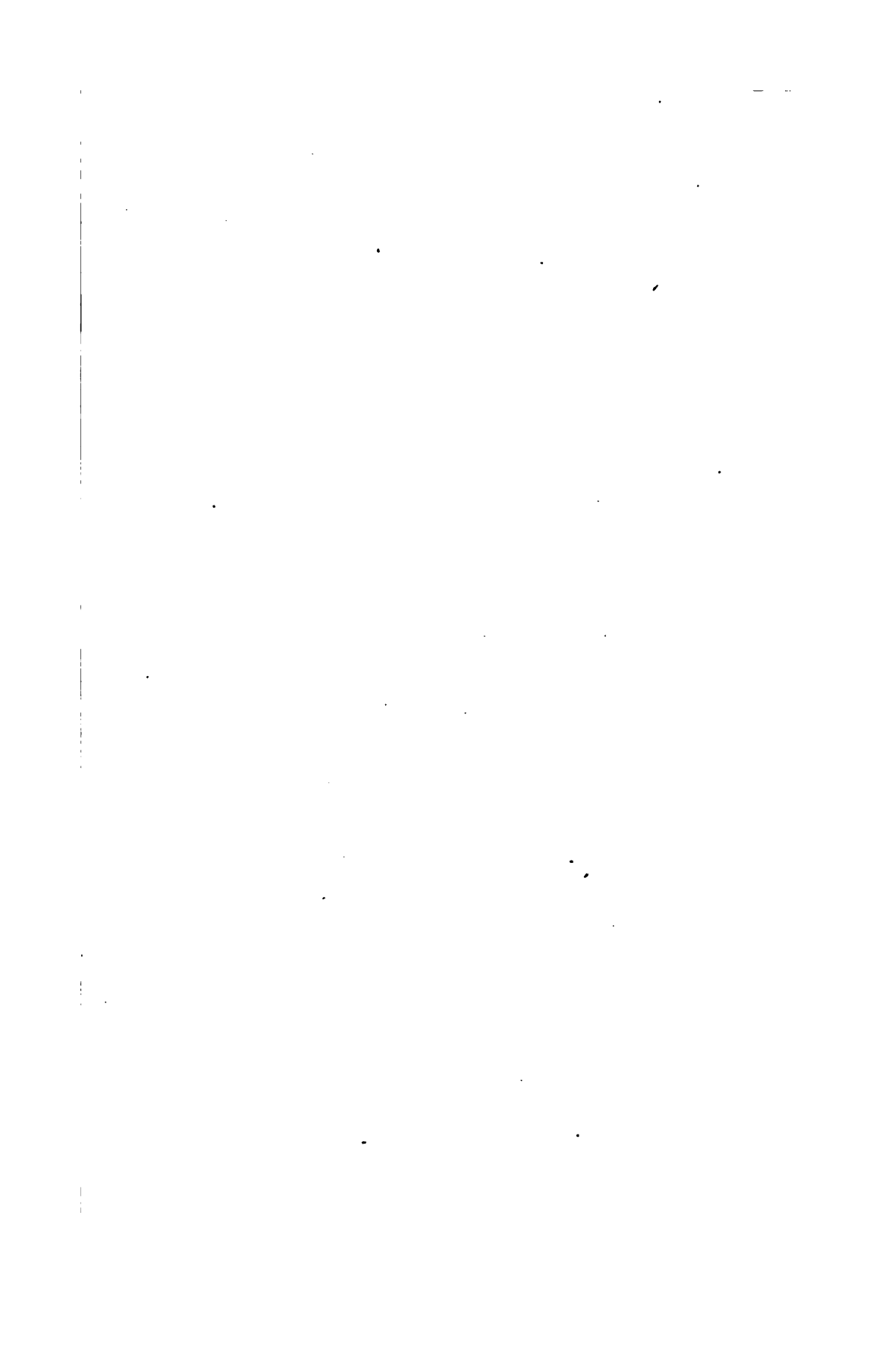
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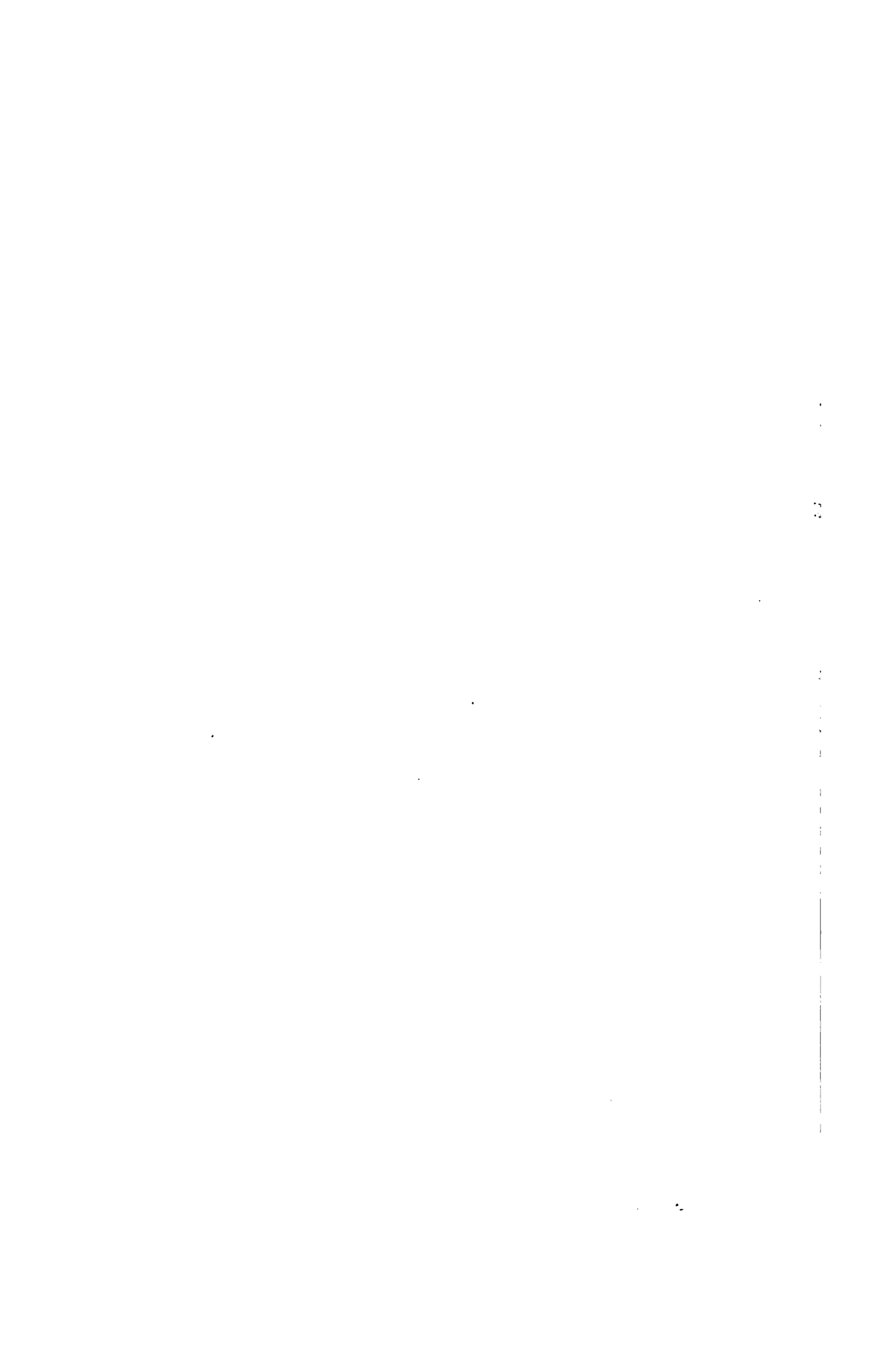
JANUARY—JUNE, 1872.



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THE MAID OF SKER.—PART VI.

CHAPTER XXXII.—AMONG THE SAVAGES.

AT this moment it became a very nice point to perceive what was really honest and right, and then to carry it out with all that fearless alacrity, which in such cases I find to be, as it were, constitutional to me. My high sense of honour would fain persuade me to keep in strictest secrecy that which (so far as I could judge) was not, or might not have been, intended for my eyes, or ears, or tongue. On the other hand, my still higher sense of duty to my employer (which is a most needful and practical feeling), and that power of loyalty which descends to me, and perhaps will die with me, as well as a strong, and no less ancestral, eagerness to be up to the tricks of all mysterious beings—I do not exaggerate when I say that the cutwater of my poor mind knew not which of these two hands pulled the stronger oar.

In short, being tired, and sleepy, and weary, and worn out with want of perceiving my way, although I

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smoked three pipes all alone (not from the smallest desire for them, but because I have routed the devil thus many and many a night I know—as the priests do with their incense; the reason of which I take to be, that having so much smoke at home, he shuns it when coming for change of air—growing dreamy thus), I said, with nobody to answer me, “I will tumble into my berth, as this dirty craft has no room for hammocks; and, between Parson and Captain, I will leave my dreams to guide me.”

I played with myself, in saying this. No man ever should play with himself. It shows that he thinks too troublesomely; and soon may come, if he carries it on, almost to forget that other people are nothing, while himself is everything. And if any man comes to that state of mind, there is nothing more to hope of him.

I was not so far gone as that. Nevertheless, it served me right (for

A

thinking such dreadful looseness) to have no broad fine road of sleep, in the depth whereof to be borne along, and lie wherever wanted; but instead of that to toss and kick, with much self-damage, and worst of all, to dream such murder that I now remember it. What it was, belongs to me, who paid for it with a loss of hair, very serious at my time of life. However, not to dwell upon that, or upon myself in any way—such being my perpetual wish, yet thwarted by great activity—let it be enough to say that Parson Chowne in my visions came and horribly stood over me.

Therefore, arising betimes, I hired a very fine horse, and, manning him bravely, laid his head east and by south, as near as might be, according to our binnacle. But though the wind was abaft the beam, and tide and all in his favour, and a brave commander upon his poop, what did he do but bouse his stem, and run out his spanker-driver, and up with his taffrail, as if I was wearing him in a thundering heavy sea. I resolved to get the upper hand of this uncalled-for mutiny; and the more so because all our crew were gazing, and at the fair I had laid down the law very strictly concerning horses. I slipped my feet out of the chains, for fear of any sudden capsize, and then I rapped him over the cat-heads, where his anchor ought to hang. He, however, instead of doing at all what I expected, up with his bolt-sprit and down with his quarter, as if struck by a whale under his fore-foot. This was so far from true seamanship, and proved him to be so unbuilt for sailing, that I was content to disembark over his stern, and with slight concussions.

"Never say die" has always been my motto, and always will be: nailing my colours to the mast, I embarked upon another horse of less

than half the tonnage of that one who would not answer helm. And this craft, being broken-backed, with a strange sound at her portholes, could not under press of sail bowl along more than four knots an hour. And we adjusted matters between us so, that when she was tired I also was sore, and therefore disembarked and towed her, until we were both fit for sea again. Therefore it must have been good meridian when I met Parson Chowne near his house.

This man was seldom inside his own house, except at his meal-times, or when asleep, but roving about uncomfortably, seeing to the veriest trifles, everywhere abusing or kicking everybody. And but for the certainty of his witchcraft (nine-fold powerful, as they told me, when conferred upon a parson), and the black strength of his eyes, and the doom that had befallen all who dared to go against him, the men about the yards and stables told me—when he was miles away—that they never could have put up with him; for his wages were also below their deserts.

He came to me from the kennel of hounds, which he kept not for his own pleasure so much as for the delight of forbidding gentlemen, whenever the whim might take him so, especially if they were nobly accoutred, from earning at his expense the glory of jumping hedges and ditches. Now, as he came towards me, or rather beckoned for me to come to him, I saw that the other truly eminent parson, the Reverend John Rambone, was with him, and giving advice about the string at the back of a young dog's tongue. Although this man was his greatest friend, Master Chowne treated him no better than anybody else would fare; but signed to the mate of the hounds, or whatever those fox-hunters call their chief officer, to heed every word of what Rambone said. Be-

cause these two divines had won faith, throughout all parishes and hundreds : Chowne for the doctrine of horses ; and for discipline of dogs, John Rambone.

His Reverence fixed a stern gaze upon me, because I had not hurried myself—a thing which I never do, except in a glorious naval action—and then he bade me follow him. This I did ; and I declare even now I cannot tell whither he took me. For I seemed to have no power, in his presence, of heeding anything but himself : only I know that we passed through trees, and sate down somewhere afterwards. Wherever it was, or may have been, so far as my memory serves, I think that I held him at bay some little. For instance, I took the greatest care not to speak of the fair young lady ; inasmuch as she might not have done all she did, if she had chanced to possess the knowledge of my being under the willow-tree. But Parson Chowne, without my telling, knew the whole of what was done ; and what he thought of it none might guess in the shadowy shining of his eyes.

"You have done pretty well on the whole," he said, after asking many short questions ; "but you must do better next time, my man. You must not allow all these delicate feelings, chivalry, resolute honesty, and little things of that sort, to interfere thus with business. These things do some credit to you, Llewellyn, and please you, and add to your happiness, which consists largely with you (as it does with all men) in conceit. But you must not allow yourself thus to coquet with these beauties of human nature. It needs a rich man to do that. Even add my five shillings to your own four, and you cannot thus go to Corinth."

I had been at Corinth twice, and found it not at all desirable ; so I

could not make out what his Reverence meant, except that it must be something bad ; which at my time of life should not be put into the mind, even by a clergyman. But what I could least put up with was, the want of encouragement I found for all my better feelings. These seemed to meet with nothing more than discouragement and disparagement, whereas I knew them to be sound, substantial, and solid ; and I always felt upon going to bed what happiness they afforded me. And if the days of my youth had only passed through learned languages, Latin and Greek and Hebrew, I doubt whether even Parson Chowne could have laid his own will upon me so.

"Supposing, then, that your Reverence should make it ten," I answered ; "with my own four, that would be fourteen."

"I can truly believe that it would, my man. And you may come to that, if you go on well. Now go into the house and enjoy yourself. You Welshmen are always hungry. And you may talk as freely as you like ; which is your next desire. Every word you say will come back to me ; and some of it may amuse me. If you have no sense, you have some cunning. You will know what things to speak of. And be sure that you wait until I come back."

This was so wholly below and outside of the thing which I love to reconcile with my own constitution (having so long been respected for them, as well as rewarded by conscience), that I scarcely knew where, or who I was, or what might next come over me. And to complete my uncomfortable sense of being nobody, I heard the sound of a galloping horse down-hill as wild as could be, and found myself left as if all the ideas which I was prepared to suggest were nothing. However, that was not my loss, but his ; so I

entered the house, with considerable hope of enjoying myself, as commanded. For this purpose I have always found it, in the house of a gentleman, the height of luck to get among three young women and one old one. The elderly woman attends to the cooking, which is not understood by the young ones, or at any rate cannot be much expected; while, on the other hand, the young ones flirt in and out in a pleasant way, laying the table and showing their arms (which are of a lovely red, as good as any gravy); and then if you know how to manage them well, with a wholesome deference to the old cook, and yet an understanding—while she is basting, and as one might almost say, behind her back—a confidential feeling established that you know how she treats those young ones, and how harshly she dares to speak, if a coal comes into the dripping-pan, and in casting it out she burns her face, and abuses the whole of them for her own fault; also a little shy suggestion that they must put up with all this, because the old cook is past sweethearting time, and the parlour-maid scarcely come to it, accompanied by a wink or two, and a hint in the direction of the stables—some of the very noblest dinners that ever I made have been thus introduced. But what forgiveness could I expect, or who would listen to me, if I dared to speak in the same dinner-hour of the goodly kitchen at Candleston Court, or even at Court Ysha, and the place that served as a sort of kitchen, so far as they seemed to want one, at this Nympton Rectory? A chill came over every man, directly he went into it; and he knew that his meat would be hocks and bones, and his gravy (if any) would stand cold dead. However, I made the best of it, as my manner is with everything; and though the old stony woman sate,

and seemed to make stone of every one, I kept my spirits up, and became (in spite of all her stoppage) what a man of my knowledge of mankind must be among woman-kind. In a word, though I do not wish to set down exactly how I managed it, in half an hour I could see, while carefully concealing it, that there was not a single young woman there without beginning to say to herself, "Should I like to be Mrs Llewellyn?" After that, I can have them always. But I know them too well, to be hasty. No prospects would suit me, at my time of life, unless they came after some cash in hand. The louts from the stables and kennels poured in, some of them very "degustin" (as my Bardie used to say), nevertheless the girls seemed to like them; and who was I, even when consulted, to pretend to say otherwise? In virtue of what I had seen, among barbarous tribes and everywhere, and all my knowledge of ceremonies, and the way they marry one another, it took me scarcely half an hour (especially among poor victuals) to have all the women watching for every word I was prepared to drop. Although this never fails to happen, yet it always pleases me; and to find it in Parson Chowne's kitchen go thus, and the stony woman herself compelled to be bitten by mustard for fear of smiling, and two or three maids quite unfit to get on without warm pats on their shoulder-blades, and the dogs quite aware that men were laughing, and that this meant luck for them if they put up their noses; it was not for me to think much of myself; and yet how could I help doing it?

In the midst of this truly social joy, and natural commune over victuals, and easing of thought to suit one another in the courtesies of digestion; and just as the slowest among us began to enter into some

knowledge of me, in walked that great Parson Rambone, with his hands behind his back, and between them a stout hunting-crop. The maidens seemed to be taken aback, but the men were not much afraid of him.

"What a rare royster you are making! Out by the kennel I heard you. However can I write my sermons?"

"Does your Reverence write them in the kennel?" Thus the chief huntsman made inquiry, having a certain privilege.

"Clear out, clear out," said Rambone, fetching his whip toward all of us; "I am left in authority here, and I must have proper discipline. Mrs Steelyard, I am surprised at you. Girls, you must never go on like this. What will his Reverence say to me? Come along with me, thou villain Welshman, and give me a light for my pipe, if you please."

It was a sad thing to behold a man of this noble nature, having gifts of everything (whether of body, or heart, or soul), only wanting gift of mind; and for want of that alone, making wreck of all the rest. I let him lead me; while I felt how I longed to have the lead of him. But that was in stronger hands than mine.

"Come, and I'll show thee a strange sight, Taffy," he said to me very pleasantly, as soon as his pipe was kindled; "only I must have my horse, to inspire them with respect for me, as well as to keep my distance. Where is thy charger, thou valiant Taffy?"

I answered his Reverence that I would rather travel afoot, if it were not too far; neither could he persuade me, after the experience of that morning, to hoist my flag on an unknown horse, the command of which he offered me. So forth we set, the Parson on horseback, and in very high spirits, trolling songs,

leaping hedges, frolicking enough to frighten one, and I on foot, rather stiff and weary, and needing a glass of grog, without any visible chance of getting it.

"Here, you despondent Taffy; take this, and brighten up a bit. It is true you are going to the gallows; but there's no room for you there just now."

I saw what he meant, as he handed me his silver hunting-flask, for they have a fashion about there of hanging bad people at cross ways, and leaving them there for the good of others, and to encourage honesty. And truly the place was chosen well; for in the hollow not far below it, might be found those savage folk, of whom I said something a good while ago. And I did not say then what I might have said; because I felt scandalised, and unwilling to press any question of doubtful doings upon thoroughly accomplished people. But now I am bound, like a hospital surgeon, to display the whole of it.

"Take hold of the tail of my horse, old Taffy," said his Reverence to me; "and I will see you clear of them. Have no fear, for they all know me."

By this time we were surrounded with fifteen or twenty strange-looking creatures, enough to frighten anybody. Many fine savages have I seen—on the shores of the Land of Fire, for instance, or on the coast of Guinea, or of the Gulf of Panama, and in fifty other places—yet none did I ever come across so outrageous as these were. They danced, and capered, and caught up stones, and made pretence to throw at us; and then, with horrible grimaces, showed their teeth and jeered at us. Scarcely any of the men had more than a piece of old sack upon him; and as for the women, the less I say, the more you will believe it. My respect for respectable women is

such that I scarcely dare to irritate them, by not saying what these other women were as concerns appearance. And yet I will confine myself, as if of the female gender, to a gentle hint that these women might have looked much nicer, if only they had clothes on.

But the poor little "piccaninies," as the niggers call them, these poor little devils were far worse off than any hatch of negroes, or Maroons, or copper-colours anywhere in the breeding-grounds. Not so much from any want of tendance or clean management, which none of the others ever got; but from difference of climate, and the moisture of their native soil. These little creatures, all stark naked, seemed to be well enough off for food, of some sort or another, but to be very badly off for want of washing and covering up. And their little legs seemed to be growing crooked; the meaning of which was beyond me then; until I was told that it took its rise from the way they were forced to crook them in, to lay hold of one another's legs, for the sake of natural warmth and comfort, as the winter-time came on, when they slept in the straw all together. I believe this was so; but I never saw it.

The Reverend John Rambone took no other notice of these people than to be amused with them. He knew some two or three of the men, and spoke of them by their nick-names, such as "Brownny," or "Horse-hair," or "Sandy boy;" and the little children came crawling on their bellies to him. This seemed to be their natural manner of going at an early age: and only one of all the very little children walked upright. This one came to the Parson's horse, and being still of a tottery order, laid hold of a fore-leg to fetch up his own; and having such moorage, looked up at the horse. The horse, for his part,

looked down upon him, bending his neck, as if highly pleased; yet with his nostrils desiring to snort, and the whole of his springy leg quivering, but trying to keep quiet, lest the baby might be injured. This made me look at the child again, whose little foolish life was hanging upon the behaviour of a horse. The rider perceived that he could do nothing, in spite of all his great strength and skill, to prevent the horse from dashing out the baby's brains with his fore-hoof, if only he should rear or fret. And so he only soothed him. But I, being up to all these things, and full for ever of presence of mind, slipped in under the hold of the horse, as quietly as possible, and in a manner which others might call at the same time daring and dexterous, I fetched the poor little fellow out of his dangerous position.

"Well done, Taffy!" said Parson Jack; "I should never have thought you had sense enough for it. You had a narrow shave, my man."

For the horse, being frightened by so much nakedness, made a most sudden spring over my body, before I could rise with the child in my arms; and one of his after-hoofs knocked my hat off, so that I felt truly thankful not to have had a worse business of it. But I would not let any one laugh at my fright.

"A miss is as good as a mile, your Reverence. Many a cannon-ball has passed me nearer than your horse's hoof. Tush, a mere trifle! Will your Reverence give this poor little man a ride?" And with that I offered him the child upon his saddle-bow, naked, and unwashed, and kicking.

"Keep off, or you shall taste my horsewhip. Keep away with your dirty brat—and yet—oh, poor little devil! If I only had a cloth with me!"

For this parson was of tender nature, although so wild and reckless; and in his light way he was moved at the wretched plight of this small creature, and the signs of heavy stripes upon him. Not all over him, as the Parson said, being prone to exaggerate; but only extending over his back, and his hams, and other convenient places. And perhaps my jacket made them smart, for he roared every time I lifted him. And every time I set him down, he stared with a wistful kind of wonder at our clothes, and at the noble horse, as if he were trying to remember something. "Where can they have picked up this poor little beggar?" said Parson Jack, more to himself than to me: "he looks of a different breed altogether. I wonder if this is one of Stoyle's damned tricks."

And all the way back he spoke never a word, but seemed to be worrying with himself. But I having set the child down on his feet, and dusted my clothes, and cleaned myself, followed the poor little creature's toddle, and examined him carefully. The rest of the children seemed to hate him, and he, to shrink out of their way almost; and yet he was the only fine and handsome child among them. For in spite of all the dirt upon it, his face was honest, and fair, and open, with large soft eyes of a dainty blue, and short thick curls of yellow hair that wanted combing sadly. And though he had rolled in muddy places, as little wild children always do, for the sake of keeping the cold out, his skin was white, where the mud had peeled, and his form lacked nothing but washing.

CHAPTER XXXIII.—IN A STATE OF NATURE.

Now all these things contributed, coming as they did so rapidly, to arouse inside me a burning and almost desperate curiosity. It was in vain that I said to myself, "these are no concerns of mine: let them manage their own affairs: the less I meddle, the better for me: I seem to be in a barbarous land, and I must expect things barbarous. And after all, what does it come to, compared with the great things I have seen, ay, and played my part in?" To reason thus, and regard it thus, and seek only to be quit of it, was a proof of the highest wisdom any man could manifest: if he could only stick to it. And this I perceived, and thus I felt, and praised myself for enforcing it so; until it became not only safe, but a bounden duty to reward my conscience by a little talk or so.

Hence I lounged into the stable-yard—for that terrible Chowne was

not yet come back, neither were maids to be got at for talking, only that stony Steelyard—and there I found three or four shirt-sleeved fellows, hissing at horses, and rubbing away, to put their sleeping polish on them, before the master should return. Also three or four more were labouring in the stalls very briskly, one at a sort of hollystoning, making patterns with brick and sand, and the others setting up the hammocks for the nags to lie in, with a lashing of twisted straw aft of their after-heels and taffrails, as the wake of a ship might be. And all of it done most ship-shape. This amused me mightily; for I never had seen such a thing before, even among wild horses, who have power to manage their own concerns. But to see them all go in so snugly, and with such a sweet, clean savour, each to his own oats or mashings, with the golden straw at foot, made

me think, and forced me to it, of those wretched white barbarians (white, at least, just here and there), whom good Parson Jack—as one might almost try to call him—had led me to visit that same afternoon.

Perceiving how the wind sate, I even held back, and smoked a pipe, exactly as if I were overseer, and understood the whole of it, yet did not mean to make rash reproach. This had a fine effect upon them, especially as I chewed a straw, by no means so as to stop my pipe, but to exhibit mastery. And when I put my leg over a rail, as if I found it difficult to keep myself from horseback, the head-man came to me straightforward, and asked me when I had hunted last.

I told him that I was always hunting, week-days, and Sundays, and all the year round, because it was our fashion; and that we hunted creatures such as he never had the luck to set eyes on. And when I had told him a few more things (such as flow from experience, when mixed with imagination), a duller man than myself might see that he longed for me to sup with him. And he spoke of things that made me ready, such as tripe and onions.

However, this would never do. I felt myself strongly under orders; and but for this paramount sense of duty, never could I have done the things modestly mentioned as of yore; and those of hereafter tenfold as fine, such as no modesty dare suppress. So, when I had explained to him exactly how I stood about it, he did not refuse to fill his pipe with a bit of my choice tobacco, and to come away from all idle folk, to a place in the shelter of a hock, where he was sure to hear the hoofs of his master's horse returning. I sate with him thus, and we got on well; and as he was going to marry soon the daughter of a

publican, who had as good as fifty pounds, and nothing that could be set on fire, and lived fifty miles away almost, he did not mind telling me all the truth, because he saw that I could keep it; and at his age he could not enter into the spirit of being kicked so. I told him I should like to see a man kick me! But he said that I might come to it.

This was a very superior man, and I durst not contradict him; and having arranged so to settle in life, how could he hope to tell any more lies! For I have always found all men grow pugnaciously truthful, so to put it, for a month almost before wedlock; while the women are doing the opposite. However, not to go far into that, what he told me was much as follows:—

Parson Chowne, in early life, before his mind was put into shape for anything but to please itself, had been dreadfully vexed and thwarted. Every matter had gone amiss, directly he was concerned in it; his guardians had cheated him, so had his step-mother, so had his favourite uncle, and of course so had his lawyers done. In the thick of that bitterness, what did his sweetheart do but throw him over. She took a great scare of his strange black eyes, when she found that his money was doubtful. This was instinct, no doubt, on her part, and may have been a great saving for her; but to him it was terrible loss. His faith was already astray a little; but a dear wife might have brought it back, or at any rate made him think so. And he was not of the nature which gropes after the bottom of everything, like a twisting auger. Having a prospect of good estates, he was sent to London to learn the law, after finishing at Oxford, not that he might practise it, but to introduce a new element to the county

magistrates, when he should mount the bench among them. Here he got rogued, as was only natural, and a great part of his land fell from him, and therefore he took to the clerical line; and being of a stern and decided nature, he married three wives, one after the other, and thus got a good deal of property. It was said, of course, as it always is of any man thrice a widower, that he or his manner had killed his wives; a charge which should never be made without strong evidence in support of it. At any rate there had been no children; and different opinions were entertained whether this were the cause or effect of the Parson's dislike and contempt of little ones. Moreover, as women usually are of a tougher staple than men can be, Chowne's successive liberation from three wives had added greatly to his fame for witchcraft, such as first accrued from his commanding style, nocturnal habits, method of quenching other people, and collection of pots and kettles. The head-groom told me, with a knowing wink, that in his opinion the Parson was now looking after wife No. 4, for he never had known him come out so smart with silver heels and crested head-piece, and even the mark of the saddle must not show upon his breeches. This was a sure sign, he thought, that there was a young lady in the wind, possessing both money and good looks, such as Chowne was entitled to, and always had insisted on. Upon that point I could have thrown some light (if prudence had permitted it), or at least I had some shrewd suspicions, after what happened beside the river; however, I said nothing. But I asked him what in his opinion first had soured the young man Chowne against the whole of the world so sadly, as he seemed to retain it now. And he answered me that he could not tell,

inasmuch as the cause which he had heard given seemed to him to be most unlikely, according to all that he saw of the man. Nevertheless I bade him tell it, being an older man than he was, and therefore more able to enter into what young folk call "inconsistencies." And so he told me that it was this. Chowne, while still a young boy, had loved, with all the force of his heart, a boy a few years younger than himself, a cousin of his own, but not with prospects such as he had. And this boy had been killed at school, and the matter hushed up comfortably among all high authorities. But Stoyle Chowne had made a vow to discover and hunt it out to the uttermost, and sooner or later to have revenge. But when his own wrongs fell upon him, doubtless he had forgotten it. I said that I did not believe he had done so, or ever would, to the uttermost.

Then I asked about Parson Jack, and heard pretty much what I expected. That he was a well-meaning man enough, although without much sense of right or wrong, until his evil star led him into Parson Chowne's society. But still he had instincts now and then, such as a horse has, of the right road; and an old woman of his church declared that he did feel his own sermons, and if let alone, and listened to, might come to act up to them. I asked whether Parson Chowne might do the like, but was told that he never preached any.

We were talking thus, and I had quite agreed to his desire of my company for supper-time, when the sound of a horse upon stony ground, tearing along at a dangerous speed, quite broke up our conference. The groom, at the sound of it, damped out his pipe, and signified to me to do the same.

"I have fired a-many of his enemies' ricks," he whispered, in his

haste and fright; "but if he were to smell me a-smoking near to a rick of his own, good Lord!" and he pointed to a hay-rope, as if he saw his halter. And though he had boasted of speedy marriage, and caring no fig for Parson Chowne, he set off for the stables at a pace likely to prove injurious to his prospects of paternity.

On the other hand, I, in a leisurely manner, picked myself up from the attitude natural to me when listening kindly, and calmly asserting my right to smoke, approached the track by which I knew that the rider must come into the yard; for all the dogs had no fear of me now, by virtue of the whistle which I bore. And before I had been there half a minute, the Parson dashed up with his horse all smoking, and himself in a heavy blackness of temper, such as I somehow expected of him.

"No Jack here! not a Jack to be seen! Have the kindness to look for my stable-whip. Ho, Llewellyn is it?"

"Yes, your Reverence, David Llewellyn, once of his Majesty's Royal Navy, and now of——"

"No more of that! You have played me false. I expected it from a rogue like you. Restore me that trust-guinea."

This so largely differed from what even Anthony Stew would dare to say in conversation with me (much less at times of evidence), that I lifted up my heart to heaven, as two or three preachers had ordered me; and even our parson had backed it up, with lineage at least as good and perhaps much better than Parson Chowne's, by right of Welsh blood under it: the whole of this overcame me so, that I could only say, "What guinea, sir?"

"What guinea, indeed! You would rob me, would you? Don't you know better than that, my man?"

Come to me in two hours' time. Stop, give me that dog's whistle!"

Taking that heed of me, and no more, he cast the reins to my friend the head-groom, who came up, looking for all the world as if never had he seen me, and wondered strangely who I could be. And this air of fright and denial always pervaded the whole household. All of which was quite against what I had been long accustomed to, wherever I deigned to go in with my news to the servants' place, or the house-keeper's room, or anywhere pointed out to me as the best for entertainment. Here, however, although the servants seemed to be plentiful enough, and the horses and the hounds to have as much as they could eat, there was not a trace of what I may call good domestic comfort. When this prevails, as it ought to do in every gentleman's household, the marks may be discovered in the eyes and the mouth of everybody. Nobody thinks of giving way to injudicious hurry when bells ring, or when shouts are heard, or horses' feet at the front door. And if on the part of the carpeted rooms any disquietude is shown, or desire to play, or feed, or ride, at times outside the convenience of the excellent company downstairs, there is nothing more to be said, except that it cannot be done, and should never in common reason have been thought of. For all servants must enjoy their meals, and must have time to digest them with proper ease for conversation and expansion afterwards. At Candleston Court it was always so; and so it should be everywhere.

However, to return to my groom, whose cordiality revived at the moment his master turned the corner, perceiving that Chowne had some matter on hand which would not allow him to visit the stables, just for the present at any rate, he turned

the black mare over to the care of an understrapper, and with a wink and a smack of his lips, gave me to know that his supper was toward. Neither were we disappointed, but found it all going on very sweetly, in a little private room used for cleaning harness. And he told me that this young cook-maid, of unusual abilities, had attached herself to him very strongly, with an eye to promotion, and having no scent of his higher engagement: neither would he have been unwilling to carry out her wishes if she could only have shown a sixpence against the innkeeper's daughter's shilling. I told him that he was too romantic, and he said with a sigh that he could not help it; but all would come right in the end, no doubt.

This honest affection impressed me not a little in his favour, and in less than half an hour I found him a thoroughly worthy fellow: while he perceived, through a square-stalked rummer, that my character was congenial. I told him therefore some foreign stories, many of which were exceedingly true, and he by this time was ready to answer almost anything that I chose to ask, even though he knew nothing about it. As for the people that wore no clothes, but lived all together in the old mud-house, there need be and could be no mystery. Every one knew that his Reverence had picked them up in his early days, and been pleased with their simple appearance and dislike of cultivation. Perceiving even then how glad he might be, in after-life, to annoy his neighbours, what did he do but bring these people (then six in number, and all of them wives and husbands to one another) and persuade them to dig themselves out a house, and by deed of gift establish them on forty acres of their own land, so that, as Englishmen love to say, their house was now their

castle. Not that these were perhaps English folk, but rather of a Gipsy cross, capable, however, of becoming white if a muscular man should scrub them. The groom said that nobody durst go near them, except Parson Chowne and Parson Jack, and that they seemed to get worse and worse, as they began to be persecuted by clothes-wearing people. I asked him what their manners were; and he said he believed they were good enough, so long as not interfered with; and who could blame them for maintaining that whether they wore clothes or not was entirely their own concern: also, that if outer strangers intruded, from motives of low curiosity, upon their unclad premises, it was only fair to point out to them the disadvantages of costume, by making it very hard to wash? There was some sense in this, because the main anxiety of mankind is to convert one another; and the pelting of mud is usually the beginning of such overtures. And these fine fellows having recurred (as Parson Chowne said) to a natural state, their very first desire would be to redeem all fellow-creatures from the evils of civilisation. Whereof the foremost perhaps is clothes, and the time we take in dressing—a twelfth part of their waking life with even the wisest women, and with the unwise virgins often not less than three-quarters; and with many men not much better.—But to come back to my savages. I asked this good groom how it came to pass that none of the sheriffs, or deputies, or even magistrates of the shire, put down this ungoodly company. He said that they had tried, but failed, according to the laws of England, on the best authority. Because these men of the ancient Adam went back to the time before the beasts had come to Adam to get their

names. They brought up their children without a name, and now all names were dying out, and they agreed much better in consequence. And how could any writ, warrant, or summons run against people without a name? It had once been tried with a "Nesho Kiss," the meaning of which was beyond me; but Parson Chowne upset that at once; and the bailiff was fit to make bricks of.

At this I shook my head and smiled; because we put up with many evils on our side of the water, but never with people so unbecoming in their manner of life and clothes. And I thought how even mild Colonel Lougher would have behaved upon such a point, and how sharp Anthony Stew would have stamped when they began to pelt him; and how I wished him there to try it!

Nevertheless I desired to know what victuals these good barbarians had; because, although like the Indian Jogis (mentioned by some great traveller) they might prove their right to go without clothes, which never were born upon them, they could not to my mind prove their power to do so well without victuals. He answered that this was a clever thing on my part to inquire about; but that I was so far wrong that these people would eat anything. His Reverence sent them every week the refuse of his garden, as well as of stable-yard and kennel, and they had a gift of finding food in everything around them. Their favourite dish—so to say, when they had never a dish among them—was what they discovered in the pasture-land; and this they divided carefully; accounting it the depth of shame, and the surest mark of civilisation, to cheat one another. But they could not expect to get this every day, in a neighbourhood of moorland; therefore, instead of

grumbling, they did their best to get on without it. And Providence always sends thousands of victuals for all whose stomachs have not been ruined by thinking too much about them; or very likely through the women beginning to make them delicate. So when a man is sea-sick he thinks of and hates almost everything.

On the other hand, these noble fellows hated nothing that could be chewed. Twenty-one sorts of toad-stool, with the insects which inhabit them; three varieties of eft, and of frogs no less than seven; also slugs six inches long, too large to have a house built; moles that live in lines of decks, like a man-of-war's-man; also rats, and brindled hedgehogs, and the grubs of hornets (which far surpass all oysters)—these, and other little things, like goat-moths, leopards, and money-grubs, kept them so alive as never to come down on the parish. Neither was there any hen-roost, rickyard, apple-room, or dairy, on the farms around them, but in it they found nourishment. Into all this I could enter, while the groom only showed the door of it.

But while we were talking thus, I heard the stable-clock strike eight, which brought Hezekiah to my mind, and my own church-clock at Newton. It struck in such a manner that I saw the door of my own cottage, also Bunny in bed, with her nostrils ready to twitch for snoring, and mother Jones, with a candle, stooping to ease her by means of a drop of hot grease; and inside, by the wall, lay Bardie, sleeping (as she always slept) with a smile of high-born quietude. And what would all three say to me if ever I got back again?

Thanking this excellent groom for all his hospitality to me, and promising at his desire to keep it from his master, I took my way (as

pointed out) to the room where his Reverence might be found. I feared that his temper would be black, unless he had dined as I had supped, and taken a good glass afterwards. And I could not believe what the groom had told me concerning one particular. There is a most utterly pestilent race arising, and growing up around us, whose object is to destroy old England, by forbidding a man to drink. St Paul speaks against them, and all the great prophets; and the very first thing that was done by our Lord, after answering them in the Temple, was to put them to shame with a great many firkins. Also one of the foremost parables is concerning bottles, as especially honest things (while bushels are to the contrary), and the tendency of all Scripture is such—whichever Testament you take—that no man in his wits can doubt it. And though I never read the Koran, and only have heard some verses of it, I know enough to say positively that Mahomet began this movement to establish Antichrist.

However, my groom said that Parson Chowne, though not such a fool as to stop other people, scarcely ever took a drop himself; and his main delight was to make low beasts of the clergy who had no self-command. And two or three years ago he had played a trick on his brother parsons, such as no man would ever have tried who took his own glass in moderation and enjoyed it heartily, as Scripture even commands us to do, to promote good-fellowship and discretion. Having a power of visitation, from some faculty he enjoyed, he sent all round to demand their presence at a certain time, for dinner. All the parsons were glad enough, especially as their wives could not, in good manners, be invited, because there was now no Mrs Chowne. And they saw a rare

chance to tell good stories, and get on without the little snaps which are apt to occur among ladies. Therefore they all appeared in strength, having represented it as a high duty, whatever their better halves might think. When a parson says this, his wife must knock under, or never go to church again. Being there, they were treated well, and had the good dinner they all deserved, and found their host very different from what they had been led to expect of him. He gave them as much wine as they needed, and a very good wine too. He let them tell their stories, though his own taste was quite different; and he even humoured them so as to laugh the while he was despising them. And though he could not bear tobacco, that and pipes were brought in for them.

All went smoothly until one of them, edged on by the others, called for spirits and hot water. This Master Chowne had prepared for, of course, and meant to present the things in good time; but now being gored thus in his own house, the devil entered into him. His dark face grew of a leaden colour, while he begged their pardon. Then out he went to Mother Steelyard, and told her exactly what to do. Two great jacks of brown brandy came in, and were placed upon the table, and two silver kettles upon the hobs. He begged all his guests to help themselves, showing the lemons and sugar-caddy, the bottles, and kettles, and everything: and then he left them to their own devices, while he talked with Parson Jack, who had dropped in suddenly.

Now, what shall I tell you came to pass—as a very great traveller always says—why, only that these parsons grew more drunk than despair, or even hope. Because, in the silver kettles was not water, but whisky at boiling-point, and the

more they desired to weaken their brandy, the more they fortified it; until they tumbled out all together, in every state of disorder. For this he had prepared, by placing at the foot of his long steps half-a-dozen butts of liquid from the cleaning of his drains, meant to be spread on the fields next day. And into the whole of this they

fell, and he bolted the doors upon them.

This made a stir in the clerical circles, when it came to be talked about; but upon reference to the bishop, he thought they had better say nothing about it, only be more considerate. And on the whole it redounded greatly to the credit of Parson Chowne.

CHAPTER XXXIV.—WAITING AND LEARNING.

What this great man now said to me had better not be set down perhaps; because it proved him incapable of forming due estimate of my character. Enough that he caused me some alarm and considerable annoyance by his supercilious vein, and assumption of evil motives. Whereas you could not find anywhere purer or loftier reasons, and, I might say, more poetical ones, than those which had led me to abstain from speaking of the fair young lady. However, as this Chowne had learned all about her, from some skulking landsman, whom he maintained as a spy at the back of the premises, it was certain that I could in no way harm her, by earning a trifle of money in front, in a thoroughly open and disciplined way. And it might even lie in my power thereby to defeat the devices of enemies, and rescue this beautiful young female from any one who would dare to think of presuming to injure her.

I found my breast and heart aglow with all the fine feeling of younger days, the moment the above occurred to me; and it would not have cost me two blows to knock down any man who misunderstood me. However, his Reverence did not afford me any chance for this exercise; but seemed to allow me the benefit which such ideas afford a man; and promised to give me three half-

crowns, instead of five shillings a-week, as before.

He allowed me a hayloft to sleep in that night, after taking good care that I had not even a flint to strike a light with. For, cordially as he did enjoy the firing of an enemy's barns or stacks, his Reverence never could bear the idea of so much as a spark coming near his own. And the following morning I saddled my horse, with a good chain undergirding, and taking turn and turn about, got home to the Rose of Devon.

And here I found very unjust work, Fuzzy gone, and Ike not to be found, and the ketch laid up for the winter. Only Bang, the boy, was left, and the purpose of his remaining was to bear me a wicked message. Namely, that I had been so much away, both in the boat and on horseback, that the captain would not be bound to me, except to get home again, how I might. And if this could not be brought about, and I chose to take care of the ketch for the winter, two shillings a-week was what I might draw, also the wood on the wharf, so long as it would last for firing; and any fish I could catch with lines; and any birds I could shoot on the river, with a stone of rock-powder that was in the hold.

Bang was ashamed to deliver this message; and I cannot describe to

you my wrath, as slowly I wrung it out of him. His head went into his neck almost, for fear of my taking it by the handles, which nature had provided in his two ears, and letting him learn (as done once before) that the mast had harder knots in it. But I always scorn injustice; and Bang was not to be blamed for this. So I treated him kindly; as I might wish a boy of my own to be treated by a man of large experience. And I let him go home to his mother's house, which was said to be somewhere within a league, and then I went to see what manners had been shown in the pickling-tub.

Here I found precious little indeed, and only the bottom stuff of coxcombs, tails, and nails, and overharpings, thready bits, and tape-worm stuff, such as we pray deliverance from, unless it comes to famine. Nevertheless, in my now condition I grieved that there was not more of it. Because, how could I get across to my native land again? All the small coasting-craft were laid up, as if they were china for shelling, immediately after that gale of wind, which (but for me) must have capsized us. These fellows up the rivers never get a breath of seamanship. Sudden squalls are all they think of. Sea-room, and the power of it, they would be afraid of.

At one time I thought of walking home, because none of these traders would venture it; and if I had only a guinea to start with on the road to Bristol, nothing could have stopped me. For, say what I might to myself about it, and reason however carefully, I could not reconcile with my conscience these things that detained me. The more I considered only three half-crowns, and the mere chance of wild-ducks on the river, the less I perceived how my duty lay, and the more it appeared to be movable. And

why was I bound to stop here like this, when their place was to take me home again, according to stipulation? To apply to the mayor, as I knew, was useless, especially now that I owed him a bill; as for the bench of magistrates, one had already a bias against me, because I went into a wood one night to watch an eclipse of the moon, and took my telescope; which they all swore was a gun! Being disappointed with the moon's proceedings, I slammed up my telescope hastily, and at the same time puffed my pipe; and there was a fellow on watch so vile as to swear to the sound and the smoke of a gun! And this fellow proved to be a Welshman of the name of Llewellyn, and a cousin of mine within seven generations! I acquit him of knowing this fact at the time; and when in cross-examination I let him know it, and nobody else, he came back to his duty, and swore white all the black he had sworn before. Nevertheless I did not like it (though acquitted amidst universal applause) on account of the notoriety; and finding him one night upon the barge walk, and his manners irritating, I was enabled to impress him with a sense of consanguinity. And after that I might bear my telescope, and take observations throughout the coverts, whenever the pheasants did not disturb me.

This privilege, and a flight of wild-ducks, followed by a team of geese, and rumours even of two wild swans, moderated my desire to be back at home again. There no man can get a shot, except in very bitter weather, or when the golden plovers come in, unless he likes to take on himself a strong defiance of public opinion. Because Colonel Lougher is so kind, and so forbears to prosecute, that to shoot his game is no game at all, and shames almost any man afterwards. And the glory

of all that night-work is, the sense of wronging somebody.

Moreover, a little thing occurred, which, in my doubt of conclusion, led me to stay a bit longer. Some people may think nothing of it, but a kind touch takes a hold on me. I have spoken of a boy, by the name of Bang, possessing many good qualities, yet calling for education. Of this I had given him some little, administered not to his head alone, but to more influential quarters; and the result was a crop of gratitude watered by humility. When he went home for the winter months, I expected to hear no more of him, having been served in that manner often by boys whom I have corrected. Therefore all who have ever observed the want of thankfulness in the young, will enter into my feelings when an ancient woman, Bang's grandmother, hailed me in a shaky voice over the side of my ketch, with Bang in the distance watching her. Between her feet was a good large basket, which with my usual fine feeling I leaped out to ease her of. But on no account would she let me touch it, until she knew more about me.

"Be you the man?" she said.

"Madam," I answered, "I be the man."

"The man as goes on so wicked to Bang, for the sake of his soul herearter?"

"Yes, madam, I am he who clothed in the wholesome garb of severity a deep and parental affection;" for now I smelled something uncommonly good.

"Be you the chap as wolopped him?"

"That I can proudly say, I am."

"Look 'e see, here, this be for 'e, then!"

With no common self-approval, I observed what she turned out; although I longed much to unpack them myself, for fear of her spoiling

anything. But she put me back in a wholesale manner, and spread it all out like a market-stand. And really it was almost enough to make a market of; for she was a very wiry old woman, and Bang had helped carry, as far as the wharf, when he saw me, and fled. Especially did I admire a goose, fat with golden fat upon him, trussed, and laid on stuffing-herbs. Also, a little pig for roasting, too young to object to it, yet with his characterformed enough to make his brains delicious. And as for sausages—but no more.

The goodness of these things preserved me from going off on the tramp just yet. That is the last thing a sailor should do, though gifted with an iron-tipped wooden leg. The Government drove me into it once, when my wound allowed me to be discharged; but it took more out of my self-respect than ever I have recovered. And if I do anything under the mark (which, to my knowledge, I never do), it dates from the time the King drove me to alms. However, I never do dwell upon that, unless there is something wrong down in my hold; and when that is right, I am thankful again. And none of that ever befalls me, when I get my rations regular. But who cares to hear any more about me, with all these great things coming on? You may look on me now as nobody.

Because I fell so much beneath my own idea of myself, and all that others said of me, through my nasty want of strength, when Parson Chowne came over me. It is easy enough to understand that a man, in good-nature, may knock under to another man of good-nature also; all in friendship and in fun, and for the benefit of the world. But for a man of intellect not so very far under the average—as will now be admitted of me, in spite of all inborn diffidence—as well as a man

of a character formed and framed by experience, now to be boarded and violently driven under hatches, without any power to strike a blow, by a man who was never on board of a ship—at any rate to my knowledge; to think of this and yet not help it, made me chafe like a fellow in irons.

There was one thing, however, that helped to make me put up with my present position a little, and that was my hope to be truly of service to my genuine benefactor, poor Sir Philip Bampfylde. This old gentleman clearly was not going on very comfortably; and Parson Chowne had given me to understand, without any words, that the great chest landed at the end of his house, was full of arms and all other treason. These were to be smuggled in, after the Captain's departure; and the Captain would not enter the house, through fear of the servants suspecting something.

I could not reconcile this account with what I had seen the young lady do, and the Captain's mode of receiving it; but as I would not tell the Parson a word about that young lady, I could not make that objection to him. Nor did I say, though I might have done so, that I would not and could not believe for a moment that any British naval captain would employ his ship and crew for a purpose of high treason to his lawful master. That Parson Chowne should dare to think that I would swallow such stuff as that, made me angry with myself for not having contradicted him. But all this time I was very wise, and had no call to reproach myself. Seldom need any man repent for not having said more than he did; and never so needeth a Welshman.

And now, though I still took observation of Narnton Court (as in honour bound to deserve my salary), and though the Parson still rode

down, and went the round of the deck at times when nobody could expect him; yet it was not in my nature to be kept from asking something as to all these people. You may frighten a man, and scare his wits, and keep him under, and trample on him, and even beat his feelers down, and shut him up like a jellyfish; but, after all this, if he is a man, he will want to know the reason. For this makes half of the difference between man and the lower animals:—the latter, when punished, accept it as a thing that must befall them; and so do the negroes, and all proper women: but a man always wants to know why it must be; though it greatly increases his trouble to ask, and still more to tell it again, if you please.

Sir Philip Bampfylde, as every one said, was a very nice gentleman indeed, the head of an ancient family, and the owner of a large estate. Kind, moreover, and affable, though perhaps a little stately, from having long held high command and important rank in the army. Some years ago he had attained even to the rank of general, which is the same thing among land-forces as an admiral is with us; and he was so proud of this position, that he always wished to be so addressed, rather than by the title which had been so long in the family. For his argument was that he had to thank good fortune for being a baronet, whereas good conduct and perseverance alone could have made him a general. Now if these had made him an admiral, I would always entitle him so: as it is, I shall call him "Sir Philip," or "General," just as may happen to come to my mind. Now this gentleman had two sons, and no other children; the elder was Philip Bampfylde Esquire, and the younger Captain Drake Bampfylde, of whom I have spoken already. Philip, the heir, had been appointed to manage

the family property, which spread for miles and miles away ; and this gave him quite enough to do, because his father for years and years was away on foreign service. And during this time Squire Philip married a lady of great beauty, sent home by his father from foreign parts after rescue from captivity. She was of very good extraction, so far as foreigners can be, and a princess (they said) in her own right, though without much chance of getting it. And she spoke the prettiest broken English, being very sensitive.

Well, everything thus far went purely enough, and the lady had brought him a pair of twins, and was giving good promise of going on, and everybody was pleased with her, and most of all her husband, and Sir Philip was come home from governorship, but only on leave of absence, and they were trying hard to persuade him now to retire and live in peace, when who should come with his evil luck to spoil everything, but Drake Bampfylde ! How it came to pass was not 'clearly known, at least to the folk on our side of the river, or those whom I met in Barnstaple. And I durst not ask on the further side, that is to say, around Narnton Court, because the Parson's spies were there. Only the old women felt pretty sure that they had heard say, though it might be wrong, that Captain Drake Bampfylde had drowned the children, some said by accident, some said on purpose, and buried them somewhere on Branton Burrows. And the effect of this on the foreign lady, being as she was, poor thing, might have been foreseen almost. For she fell into untimely pains, and neither herself nor her babe survived, exactly as happened to my son's wife.

This was a very sad story, I thought, but they said that the worst of it still lay behind : for poor Squire Philip had been so upset by

the hurry of all these misfortunes, that nobody knew what to do with him. He always had been a most warm-hearted man, foolishly fond of his wife and children, and of a soft and retiring nature. Moreover, he looked on his younger brother, who had seen so much more of the world than himself, and was of a bolder character, not with an elder son's usual carelessness, but with a thorough admiration. And when he found him behave in this manner (according, at least, to what every one said), and all for the sake of the property, without a sharp word between them, it went to his heart, in the thick of his losses, so that he was beside himself. He let his beard grow and his hair turn white, although he was not yet forty, and he put up the shutters of his room, and kept candles around him, and little dolls. He refused to see his brother Drake, and his father Sir Philip, and everybody, except his own attendant, and the nurse of his poor children. And finding this, the Captain left the house, as if cursed out of it.

The only one who took things bravely was the ancient General. Much as he grieved at the loss of his race, and extinction, perhaps, of the family, he swore that he never would be cast down, or doubt the honour of his favourite son, until that son confessed it. This Drake Bampfylde had never done, although the case was hard against him, and scarcely any one, except his father, now stood up for him. But of the few who still held him guiltless, was one especial comforter ; Isabel Carey to wit, a young lady of very good Devonshire family, left as a ward to Sir Philip Bampfylde, and waiting for three or four years more of age, to come into large estates in South Devon.

The general people did not know this ; but I happened to get ahead

of them; and having a knack in my quiet way of putting two and two together, also having seen the Captain, and shaped my opinions, I would have staked my boat against a cuttle-fish that he was quite innocent. If the children were found buried—although I could never quite get at this, but only a story of a man who had seen him doing it, as I shall tell hereafter—but even supposing them deep in the sand (which I was a little inclined to do, from trusting my spy-glass so thoroughly), yet there might have been other people quite as likely to put them there as that unlucky Captain Drake.

It has been my lot to sail under a great many various captains, not only whom I have hinted at in the days when I was too young for work, but whom I mean to describe hereafter in my far greater experiences; really finding (although I have tried to convince people to the contrary) that what they have told me was perfectly true, and that I come out far stronger and better whenever my reins are tried and proved; and my loins as sound as a bell, although hereditary from King David. Let that pass. I find one fault, and it is the only one to be found with me; it is that the style of our bards will come out, and spread me abroad in their lofty allusions.

To come back to these captains. I never found one who would do such a thing as kill and slay two children, much less dig their graves in the sand, and come home to dinner afterwards. And of all the

captains I had seen, Drake Bampfylde seemed as unfit as any to do a thing of that dirtiness. However, as I have not too much trust in human nature (after the way it has used me, and worst of all when in the Government), I said to myself that it was important to know at what time this Captain Bampfylde won the love of that fine Miss Carey. Because, after that, he had no temptation to put the little ones out of the way; and I quite settled it in my own mind, that if they had set up their horses together, before the young children went out of the world, Captain Drake Bampfylde was not likely to have made them go so. For that fair maiden's estates, I was told, would feed four hundred people.

No one had seen this, exactly as I did, nor could I beat it into them; and I found from one or two symptoms that it was high time for me to leave off talking. Parson Chowne came down one night, as black as a tarred thunderbolt, and though he said nothing to let me know, I felt afraid of his meaning. Also Parson Jack rode down, in his headlong careless way, and filled his pipe from my tobacco-bag, and gave me a wink, and said, "Keep your mouth shut." It was always a pleasure to me to behold him; whatever his principles may have been, and if I could have said a word to stop him from his downward road, or to make it go less sudden, goodness knows I would have done it, at the risk of three half-crowns a-week.

CHAPTER XXXV.—THE POLITE FERRYMAN.

Now, for a man of my age and knowledge, keeping an eye on his own concerns, and under the eyes of a good many women (eager to have him, because confessed superior to the neighbourhood, yet naturally doubtful how much money would

be wanted), for such a man to attend to things which could not concern him in any way, without neglecting what now he had found a serious matter at his time of life—this, to my mind, proves a breadth of sympathy rarely found outside of Wales.

Entering into these things largely, and desiring to do my best, having, moreover, nought else to do except among dabs and flounders, I was led by a naturally active mind to try to turn a penny; not for my own good so much as for the use of Bunny. Therefore, having the punt at command, and a good pair of oars, and a good pair of arms, what did I do but set up a ferry, such as had never been heard of before, and never might have been dreamed of, except for my intelligence? Because we had two miles to Barnstaple Bridge, and no bridge at all to be found below us, and a good many houses here and there, on either side of the river. And I saw that they must know one another, and were longing to dine or to gossip together, except for the water between them, or the distance to walk all the way by the bridge. So being left in this desolate state, and shamefully treated by Captain Fuzzy, and Bang's grandmother now neglecting me, at a period of sadness, while smoking a pipe, Providence gave me this brilliant idea.

I never had dreamed for a moment of settling without something permanent; and not even £30 a-year would tempt me to do any despite to my late dear wife's remembrance. A year and a day at the very least was I resolved to mourn for her: still, as the time was drawing on, I desired to have some prospect. Not to settle rashly, as young people do in such affairs (which really should be important), but to begin to feel about, and put the price against the weight, and then take time to think about it. Only I had made up my mind not to look twice at the very richest and most beautiful Methodist. Enough had I had for my life of them, and the fellows that come after them: Church of England, or Church of Rome, for me this time at any rate;

with preference to the latter because having no chapel in our neighbourhood.

And I worked this ferry, if you will believe me, not for the sake of the twopence both ways, half so much as because of my thoughts of the confidence that I must create. I knew for I won't say forty years, but at any rate good thirty, what women are the very moment they must needs come into a boat. The very shyest and wisest of them are at the mercy of a man right out. And I never could help believing that they come for that very reason. I know all their queerness of placing their toes, and how they fetch their figures up, and manage to hitch their petticoats, and try to suppose they are quite on a balance, and then go down plump on the nearest thwart, and pretend that they did it on purpose. Nevertheless they are very good; and we are bound to make the best of them.

When I told Parson Chowne of my ferry-boat, rather than let him find it out, which of course must have happened immediately, a quick gleam of wrath at my daring to do such a thing without consulting him moved in the depth of his great black eyes. At least I believed so, but was not sure; for I never could bear to look straight at his eyes, as I do to all other people, especially Anthony Stew, Esquire. I thought that my ferry would be forbidden; but with his usual quickness he saw that it might serve his purpose in several ways. Because it would help to keep me there, as well as account for my being there, and afford me the best chance in the world of watching the river traffic. So he changed his frown to an icy smile, such as I never could smile at, and said—

"Behold now what good-luck comes of my service! Only remember, no fares to be taken when the

tide serves for you know what. And especially no gossiping."

This being settled to my content, I took a great piece of loose tarpaulin out of the hold of the *Rose of Devon*, and with a bucket of thick lime-whiting explained to the public in printing letters, each as large as a marlin-spike, who I was, and of what vocation, and how thoroughly trustworthy. And let any one read it, and then give opinion in common fairness, whether any man capable of being considered a spy would ever have done such a thing as this:—

"David Llewellyn, Mariner of the Royal Navy, Ferryman to King George the III^d. Each way or both ways only Twopence. Ladies put carefully over the Mud. Live Fish on hand at an hour's notice, and of the choicest Quality." This last statement was not quite so accurate as I could have desired. To oblige the public, I kept the fish too long on hand occasionally, because I never had proper notice when it might be wanted. And therefore no reasonable person ever took offence at me.

One fine day towards the frosty time, who should appear at my landing-stage on the further side of the river, just by the lime-kiln not far from the eastern end of Narnton Court—who but a beautiful young lady with her maid attending her? The tide was out, and I was crossing with a good sixpennyworth, that being all that my boat would hold, unless it were of children. And seeing her there, I put on more speed, so as not to keep her waiting. When I had carried my young women over the mud and received their twopences, I took off my hat to the fair young lady, who had kept in the background, and asked to what part I might have the honour of conveying her ladyship.

"I am not a ladyship," she an-

swered, with a beautiful bright smile; "I am only a common lady; and I think you must be an Irishman."

This I never am pleased to hear, because those Irish are so untruthful; however, I made her another fine bow, and let her have her own way about it.

"Then, Mr Irishman," she continued; "you are so polite, we will cross the water. No, no, thank you," as I offered to carry her; "you may carry Nanette, if she thinks proper. Nanette has the greatest objection to mud; but I am not quite so particular." And she tripped with her little feet over the bank too lightly to break the green cake of the ooze.

"You sall elave me, my good man," said Nanette, who was rather a pretty French girl; "Mamselle can afford to defigure her dress; but I can no such thing do at all."

Meanwhile the young lady was in the boat, sitting in the stern-sheets like a lieutenant, and laughing merrily at Nanette, who was making the prettiest fuss in the world, not indeed with regard to her legs, which an English girl would have considered first, but as to her frills and fripperies; and smelling my quid, she had no more sense than to call me a coachman, or something like it. However, I took little heed of her, although her figure was very good; for I knew that she could not have sixpence, and scarcely a hundred a-year would induce me to degrade myself down to a real French wife. For how could I expect my son ever to be a sailor?

Now as I pulled, and this fine young lady, who clearly knew something about a boat, nodded her head to keep time with me, and showed her white teeth as she smiled at herself, my own head was almost turned, I declare; and

I must have blushed, if it could have been that twenty years of the fish-trade had left that power in me. Because this young lady was so exactly what my highest dreams of a female are, and never yet realised in my own scope. And her knowledge of a boat, and courage, and pleasant contempt of that French chit who had dared to call me a "coachman," when added to her way of looking over the water with fine feeling (such as I very often have, and must have shown it long ago), also the whole of this combined with a hat of a very fine texture indeed, such as I knew for Italian, and a feather that curled over golden pennon of hair in the wind like a Spanish ensign; and not only these things, but a face, and manner, and genuine beauty of speech, not to be found in a million of women,—after dwelling on all these things both steadily and soberly, over my last drop of grog, before I went into my berth that night, and prayed for the sins of the day to go upward, what do you think I said on the half-deck, and with all the stars observing me—"I am damned if I'll serve Parson Chowne any more." I said it, and I swore it.

And when I came to think of it, in a practical manner, next morning, and to balance the ins and outs, and what I might come to, if thus led astray, by a man in holy orders (yet whose orders were all unholy, at any rate such as he gave to me), and when I reflected on three half-crowns for finding me in everything, and then remembered how I had turned two guineas in a day, when poor Bardie came to me, and with a conscience as clear as a spent cuttle-fish; and never a sign of my heels behind me, when squeamish customers sat down to dinner; also good Mother Jones with sweet gossip,

while my bit of flesh was grilling, and my little nip of rum, and the sound of Bunny snoring, while I smoked a pipe and praised myself; also the pleasure of doubting whether they could do without me at the "Jolly" through the wall, and the certain knowledge how the whole of the room would meet me, if I could deny myself enough to go among them;—these things made me lose myself, as in this sentence I have done, in longing to find old times and places, and old faces, once again, and some one to call me "Old Dyo."

Now who would believe that the whole of all this was wrought in my not very foolish mind, by the sight of a beautiful high-bred face, and the sound of a very sweet softening voice? Also the elegant manner in which she never asked what the passage would come to, but gave me a bright and true half-crown for herself and that frippery French girl. I must be a fool; no doubt I am, when the spirit of ancestors springs within me, spoiling all trade; as an inborn hiccough ruins the best pipe that ever was filled. For though I owed three tidy bills, I had no comfort until I drilled a little hole in that bright half-crown, and hung it with my charms and knobs and caul inside my Jersey. And thus the result became permanent, and my happiness was in my heart again, and all my self-respect leaped up as ready to fight as it ever had been, when I had shaped a firm resolve to shake off Chowne, like the devil himself.

I cannot imagine a lower thing than for any man to say—and some were even to that degree base—that I thus resolved upon calculation, and ability now to get on without him, and balance of his three half-crowns against the income of my ferry, with which I admit that his work interfered. Neither would any but a

very vile man dare to cast reflections upon me, for having created by skill and eloquence a small snug trade in the way of fish, and of those birds which are sent by the Lord in a casual way, and without any ownership, for the good of us un-estimated folk. While I deny as unequivocally as if upon oath before magistrates, that more than fifty hares and pheasants—but there! I may go on for ever rebutting those endless charges and calumnies, which the mere force of my innocent candour seems to strike out of maliciousness. Once for all, I never poach, I never stab salmon, I never smuggle, I never steal boats, I never sell fish with any stink outside of it, —and how can I tell what it does inside, or what it may do afterwards?—I never tell lies to anybody who does not downright call for it; and you may go miles and miles, I am sure, to find a more thoroughly honourable, good-hearted, brave, and agreeable man.

Now I did not mean to say any of this, when I began about it; neither am I in the habit of deigning even to clear myself; but once beginning with an explanation, I found it the best to start clear again; because Parson Chowne, and my manner towards him (which for the life of me I could not help), also my service under him, and visit at his house, and so on, and even my liking for Parson Jack (after his sale to Satan, though managed without his privity), as well as my being had up for shooting pheasants with a telescope;—these and many other things, too small now to dwell upon, may have spread a cloud betwixt my poor self and my readers; and a cloud whose belly is a gale of wind.

It is not that I ever could do any unworthy action. It is simply that I can conceive the possibility of it seeming so to those who have never

met me; and who from my over-candid account (purposely shaped dead against myself) may be at a loss to enter into the delicacies of my conduct. But you shall see by-and-by; and seeing is believing.

Now it was a lucky thing, that on the very morning after I had made my mind up so, and before it was altered much, down came Chowne in a tearing mood, with his beautiful black mare all in a lather. I was on board of the *Rose of Devon*, smoking my first after-breakfast pipe, and counting my cash from the ferry business of the day before—except, of course, the half-crown which lay among my charms, and strengthened me. The ketch was aground in a cradle of sand, which she had long ago scooped for herself, and which she seldom got out of now, except just to float at the top of the springs. She stood almost on an even keel, unless it were blowing heavily. Our punt (or rather I should call her mine by this time, for of course she most justly belonged to me, after all their breach of contract, and desertion of their colours)—at any rate, there she was afloat and ready for any passenger, while my notice to the public flapped below the mainboom of the ketch.

“You precious rascal,” cried Chowne, from the wharf, with his horse staring at the tarpaulin, and half inclined to shy from it; “who was it crossed the river twice in your rotten ferry-boat yesterday?”

“Please your Reverence,” I answered, calmly puffing at my pipe, which I knew would still more infuriate him: “will your Reverence give me time to think? Let me see—why, let me see—there was Mother Pugsley from up the hill, and Mother Bidgood from round the corner, and Farmer Skinner, and young Joe Thorne, and Eliza Tucker from the mill, and Jenny Stribling, and Honor Jose, first cousin to our cap-

tain, and— well I think that's nearly all that I know the name of, your Reverence."

"I thought you knew me better now than to lie to me, Llewellyn. You know what I mean as well as I do."

"To be sure, to be sure, your Reverence; I beg your pardon altogether. I ought to have remembered poor old Nanny Gotobed."

The wharf was high, and our gunwale below it; he put his mare at it, clapped in the spurs, and before I could think or even wonder, he had me by the nape of the neck, with his knuckles grinding into me, and his face, now ashy white with rage, fixed on me, so that I could not move.

"Will you tell me?" he cried.

"I won't," said I; crack came his hunting-whip round my sides—crack, and wish, and crack again; then I caught up a broken spar, and struck him senseless over the tail of his horse. The mare ramped all round the half-deck mad, then leaped ashore, with her legs all bloody, and scoured away with her saddle off.

Chowne lay so long insensible, that a cold sweat broke through the heat of my wrath, to think that I had killed him. And but for his hat, I had done no less, for I struck with the strength of a maddened man, and the spar was of heavy Dantzic. I untied his neckcloth, and ran for water, and propped him up, and bathed his forehead, although my hands were trembling so that I could scarcely hold the swab. And now as I watched his pale stern face, without a weak line in it even from fainting, I was amazed at having ever dared to lift hand against him. But what Royal Navyman could ever put up with horsewhip?

At last he fetched a strong breath, and opened the usual wickedness of his eyes, and knew me at once, but

did not know exactly what had befallen him. I have had a good deal to do with knocking down a good many men, and know that such is their usual practice; and that if you take them promptly then, they will sometimes believe things very freely. Therefore I said, "Your Reverence has contrived to hit yourself very hard, but I hope you will soon be better again."

"Hit myself! Why, somebody hit me!" and then he went off again into a doze, from the buzzing of his head perhaps. Perceiving that he would soon come to himself, and desiring to be acquitted of any violent charge of battery, I jumped down into the hold and fetched an old boom that was lying there, and hoisted it up in the tackle-fall, so as to hang at about the right height. Moreover, I put the spar well away; and then, with a sluice of water, I fetched his Reverence back to himself again. I found him very correct this time, and beginning to look about pretty briskly, therefore I turned him away and said, "Your Reverence must not look at it—it will make your head go round again; either shut your eyes or look away, your Worship."

He seemed not to notice me, so I went on, "Your Reverence has had a narrow escape. What a mercy your head is not broken! Your Reverence went to chastise me, and lo! your horse reared and threw your Reverence against that great boom which that lubberly Jose has left there ever since we broke cargo."

"You are a liar," he said; "you struck me. To the last day of your life you shall rue it."

The voice of his throat ran cold all through me, being so low and so cold itself; and the strength of his eyes was coming back, and the bitter disdain of his countenance. The devil, who wanted him for a rare morsel in the way of cannibalism, stood at my elbow; but luckily

thought it sweeter not to hurry it. The foulest man on all God's earth, who made a scoff of mercy's self, lay at my mercy for a minute, de-

fied it, took it, and hated it. For the sake of myself, I let him go. For the sake of mankind, I should have slain him.

CHAPTER XXXVI.—UNDER FAIRER AUSPICES.

Knowing now what I had to expect from Parson Chowne and from all his train (whether clothed or naked), and even perhaps from Parson Jack, who lay beneath his thumb so much, and who could thrash me properly; I seized the chance of a good high tide, and gave a man sixpence to help me, and warped the *Rose of Devon* to a berth where she could float and swing, and nobody come a-nigh her without a boat or a swimming-bout. Because I knew from so many folk what a fiend I had to deal with, and that his first resort for vengeance (haply through his origin) generally was to fire. They told me that when he condescended to do duty in either church—for two he had, as I may have said—all the farmers took it for a call to have their ricks burned. They durst not stay away from church, to save the very lives of them, nor could they leave their wives behind, on account of the unclothed people: all they could hope was that no offence had come from their premises, since last service. The service he held just as suited his mood; sometimes three months, and the church-door locked; sometimes three Sundays one after the other, man, woman, and child demanded. Whenever this happened, the congregation knew that the parish had displeased him, and that he wanted them all in church; while his boy was at the stackyards. He never deigned to preach, but made the prayers themselves a comedy, singing them up to the clerk's "amen," and the neigh of his mare from the vestry.

I cannot believe even half that I

hear from the very best authority; therefore I set nothing down which may be over-coloured. But the following story I know to be true, because seven people have told it me, and not any two very different. Two or three bishops and archdeacons (or deacons of arches, I know not which, at any rate high freemasons) desired to know some little more about a man in their jurisdiction eminent to that extent, and equally notorious. They meant no harm at all, but just to take a little feel of him. Because he had come to visitation, once or twice when summoned, with his huntsman and his hounds, and himself in leathern breeches. There must have been something amiss in this, or at any rate they thought so; and his lordship, a bishop just appointed, made up his mind to tackle him. He came in a coach-and-four, and wearing all his high canonicals, and they managed somehow to get up the hill, and appear at Nympton Rectory. Then a footman struck the door with a gold stick well embossed; and he struck again, and he struck again, more in dudgeon every time.

Because no man had yet been seen, nor woman on the premises; only dogs very wild and mad, but kept away from biting. "Strike again," said his lordship, nodding under his wig, with some courtesy; "we must never be impatient. Jemmy, strike again, my lad." Jemmy struck a thundering stroke, and out came Mrs Steelyard. She looked at them all, and then she said, with her eyes full on the Bishop's, "Are you robbers, or are you savages? My master in that state and you do

this !” And they all saw that she could not weep, by reason of too much sorrow. “It is the Lord Bishop,” said the footman, keeping a little away from her. “Excellent female,” began his Lordship, spreading his hands in a habit learned according to his duties, “tell your master that his * Jehoshaphat wishes to see him.” “Mr Jehoshaphat,” she replied, “you are just in time, and no more, sir. How we have longed for a minister ! You are just in time and no more, sir. Will you have the kindness to come this way, and to step as quietly as you can !” His Lordship liked not the look of this ; being, however, a resolute man, he followed the stony woman up the staircase, and into a bedroom with the window-curtains three quarters drawn. And here he found a pastille burning, and a lot of medicine-bottles, and a Bible on the table open, and on it a pair of spectacles. In the bed lay some one, with a face of fire heavily blotched with bungs of black, and all his body tossing with spasms and weak groaning. “What means this !” asked his Lordship, drawing considerably nearer to the door. “Only the †plague,” said the stony woman ; “he was took with it yesterday ; doctor says he may last two hours more almost, particular if he can get anybody to take the symptoms off him. I expect to be down with it some time to-night, because I feel the tingling. But your Highness will stop and help us.” “I am damned if I will,” cried the Bishop, sinking both manners and dignity in the violence of alarm ; and he ran down the stairs at such a pace that his apron-strings burst, and he left it behind, and he jumped

into the coach with his two feet foremost, and slammed up the windows, and ordered full speed. Then Parson Chowne rose, and threw off his mask, and drew back the window-curtain, and sat in his hunting-clothes, and watched with his usual bitter smile the rapid departure of his foe. And he had the Bishop’s apron framed, and hung it in the parsonage hall, from a red-deer’s antlers, with the name and date below. And so of that Bishop he heard no more.

Now a man who had beaten three bishops, and all the archdeacons in the country, was of course tenfold of a match for me ; and when he rode down smoothly to me, as he did in a few days’ time, and never touched on our little skirmish, except with a sort of playful hit (so far as his haughty mind could play), and riding another horse without a word about the mischief which his favourite mare had taken, and demanded, as a matter of justice, that having quitted his service now, I should pay back seven-and-sixpence drawn in advance for wages, I was obliged to touch my hat, as if I had never made stroke at his, or put my knee upon him. He had flogged me to such purpose that I ever must admire him ; for the flick of the boat-swain’s lash was a tickle compared to what Chowne took out of me ; and if I must tell the whole truth, I was prouder of having knocked down such a wonderful man than of all of my victories put together. But one of my weak and unreasonable views of life is this, that having thrashed a man, I feel a great power of goodwill to him, and a desire to give him quarter, and the more so the less he cries for it.

* † Diocesan.

† There are several entries of deaths from plague in parish registers of North Devon, circa 1790. Perhaps it was what they now call “black fever,” the most virulent form of typhus.

But, on the whole, I was not so young, after all that was said by everybody, as to imagine for a moment that I had felt the last of him. The very highest in the land had been compelled to yield to him; as when he turned out my Lord G——'s horses from the stabling ordered at Lord G——'s inn. Would such a man accept defeat from a crazy old mariner like me? Feeling my danger, and meaning never to knock under any more, I refused, as a matter of principle, to restore so much as a halfpenny; and if I understand law at all, he was bound to give me another week's wages, in default of notice. However, I could not get it; and therefore am glad to quit such trifles.

From all experience it was known that this man never hurried vengeance. He knew that he was sure to get it; and he liked to dwell upon it, thus prolonging his enjoyment by the means of hope. He loved, as in the case of that unfortunate Captain Vellacott, to persuade his enemies that he had forgiven, or at least forgotten them, and then to surprise them, and laugh to himself at their ignorance of his nature. So I felt pretty sure that I had some time till my life would be in danger. For, of course, he knew that my ferry business, growing in profit daily, would keep me within his reach for the present, over and above the difficulty of getting across the Channel now. However, he began upon me sooner than I expected, on account, perhaps, of my low degree.

But in the meanwhile, feeling sure that I could not stand worse with him than I did—desiring, moreover, to ease my conscience, and perhaps improve my income, by an act of justice—I crossed the river to Narnton Court, and getting among the servants nicely, sent word in to Miss Isabel Carey that the old ferryman begged leave to see her upon

business most particular. For, of course (although, in the hurry of things, I may have forgotten to mention it), the lovely young lady I ferried across, and whose name I was thrashed so for not betraying, was Captain Drake's sweetheart, the ward of Sir Philip.

One of the most hateful things in Chowne was, that he never did anything in the good old-fashioned manner, unless it were use of the horse-whip. And it now rejoiced my heart almost to be shown into a fine dark room, by the side of good long passages, with a footman going before me, and showing legs of a quite superior order, and then under my instructions boldly throwing an oaken door wide, and announcing, "Mr David Llewellyn, ma'am!"

For though I had left Felix Farley behind, from a sort of romantic bashfulness, I had seen in the hall a coloured gentleman, who seemed justly popular; therefore I had just dropped a hint (not meant to go any further) concerning my risk of life and fortitude for the sake of black men. And this made the women admire me, for it turned out that this worthy negro stood high in the house, and had saved some cash. The room which I entered was large and high, with an amazing number of books in it, and smelling exceedingly learned. And there in a deep window sat the young lady, with the light from the river glancing on the bright elegance of her hair. And when she rose and came towards me, I felt uncommonly proud of having been even thrashed for her sake: nor did I wonder at Captain Drake's warm manner of proceeding, or at Chowne's resolve to keep so jealous a watch over her. Over and above her beauty, which was no business of mine, of course, she had such pretty eyebrows and so sweet a way of looking, that a thrill went to my experienced heart,

in spite of all experience ; and women seemed a different thing from what I was accustomed to.

Therefore I left her to begin ; while I made bows, and felt afraid of giving offence by gazing. She, however, put me at my ease almost directly, having such a high-bred way, so clarified and gentle, that I neither could be distant nor familiar with her. Only to be quite at ease, like, respect, and love her. And this lady was only about seventeen ! It is wonderful how they learn so much.

I need not follow all I said, or even what she said to me. Without for a moment sacrificing my true sense of dignity, I gave her to understand, very mildly, that I had seen something, and had taken a vague sense of its import, when I chanced to be after wild-ducks. Also that strong attempts had been made to set me spying after her, and that I might have yielded to them, but for my own lofty sense of being a victorious veteran, and the way in which I was conquered by her extraordinary beauty.

She seemed for a moment to doubt how far I should have touched that subject ; and if I had only looked up she would have rung the bell decidedly. But I bowed, and kept down my eyelashes ; which were grey now, and helped me much in paying innocent compliments to every kind of woman. Even in the bar of very first-rate public-houses have I been pressed to take, and not pay for, glasses even of ancient stingo, because of the way I have paid respects, and looked through my shadows afterwards. Therefore this young lady said, "I hardly know what to do or say. Mr Llewellyn, it is a strange tale. Why should any one watch me ?"

"That is more than I can say, my lady. I only know that the thing is done, and by a very wicked man indeed."

"And you have found it out, as ferryman ? How clever of you, to be sure ! And how honest to come and tell me ! You have been a royal sailor !"

"In the Royal Navy, ma'am ! Our captains are the most noble men, so brave, and glorious, and handsome ! If you could only see one of them !"

"Perhaps I have," she said, under her breath, being carried away by my description, as I hoped to do to her ; and then she came back through a shading of colours to herself, and looked at me, as if to say, "Have you detected me now ?" I touched my lock ; and by no means seemed to have dreamed a suspicion of anything.

"You are a most worthy man," she said ; "and wonderfully straightforward. None but a Royal Navy sailor could have behaved so nobly. In spite of all the bribes offered you——"

"No, no, no !" I cried ; "nothing to speak of ! nothing to speak of ! What is a guinea and a half a-week when it touches a man's integrity ?"

"Three guineas a-week you shall have at once ; because you have behaved so nobly, and because you have fought for your country so, and been left with nothing (I think you said), with half of your lungs quite shot away, except twopence a-day to live upon !"

"One and eightpence farthing a-week, my lady ; and to be signed by a clergyman ; and twenty-eight miles to walk for it."

"It vexes me so to hear such things. Don't tell me any more of it. What is the use of having money except for the people who want it ? Mr Llewellyn, you must try not to be offended."

I saw that there was something coming, but looked very grave about it. A man of my rank and mark

must never be at all ready, and much less eager, to lay himself under any form of trifling obligation. And thoroughly as she had won me over, I tried very hard not to be offended, while she was going to a small black desk. If she had come thence with a guinea or two, my mind was made up to do nothing more than gracefully wave it back again, and show myself hurt at such ignorance of me. But now when she came with a £5 note (such as Sir Philip seemed to keep in stock), my duty to Bardie and Bunny rose as upright as could be before my eyes, and overpowered all selfish niceties. I would not make a fuss about it, lest I might hurt her feelings, but placed it in my pocket with a bow of silent gratitude. Perhaps my face conveyed to her that it was not the money I cared for; only to do what was just and right, as any British sailor must when delicately handled. Also her confidence in me was so thoroughly sweet and delicate, that I felt the whole of my heart wrapped up in saving her from her enemies. We made no arrangements about it; but I went into her service bodily, being left to my own discretion, as seemed due to my skill and experience. I was to keep the ferry going, because of the opportunities, as well as to lull suspicion, and always at dark I was bound to be (according to my own proposal) near the river front of the house, to watch against all wicked treachery. And especially if a spy of Chowne's should come sneaking and skulking there, whether in a boat or out of it, I gladly volunteered to thrash him within an inch of his foul base life. The bad man's name never passed between us; and indeed I may say that the lady forbore from committing herself against anybody, so that I was surprised to find such wit in one so youthful.

We settled between us that my duties were to begin that very day,

and my salary of course to run, also how the lady was to let me know when wanted, and I to tell her when I discovered anything suspicious. And as I had been compelled to restore the Parson's gun to his gun-maker, Miss Carey led me to a place you might almost call an armoury, and bade me choose any piece I liked, and her own maid should place it where I could find it that same evening, as though it were to shoot wild-fowl for them. But she advised me on no account to have any talk with Nanette, or any servants of the household, whether male or female, not only because of the wicked reports and cruel slanders prevailing, but also that it might not be known how I was to act in her interest. And then having ordered me a good hot dinner in the butler's pantry, as often was done for poor people, she let me go once, and then called me back, and said, "Oh, nothing;" and then called me again, and said, looking steadily out of the window, "By the by, I have quite forgotten to say that there is a boat belonging to a ship commanded by a son of Sir Philip Bampfylde, a white boat, with three oars on each side, and sometimes an officer behind them. If they should happen to come up the river, or to go ashore upon business here, you need not—I mean, you will quite understand that no harm whatever is intended to me, and therefore that you may—you see what I mean."

"To be sure, to be sure, my lady. Of course I may quit my duty so long as there is a man-of-war's boat in the river; even the boldest and worst of men would venture nothing against you then."

"Quite so," she replied, looking bravely round, with as much of pride in her bright blue eyes as of colour on her soft fresh cheeks. So I made my best bow and departed.

FRENCH HOME LIFE

NO. III.—FURNITURE.

Most of us have written more than once in our school copy-books, "*Habit is second nature*;" but though we may have assiduously inscribed the phrase with all the perfection of caligraphy of which we then were capable—though we may have often remembered and quoted it since—it is probable that we have at no time realised either its profound truth or the universality of its application. The very essence of habit is to blind us to its own effects, to render us almost unconscious of its own action, to divert our thoughts from the subjects to which it most applies. The stronger the habits we have, the more thoroughly we live in and with them, the more are we generally obliged to make an effort to remember their existence. Certain of them appear, indeed, to escape our observation altogether; they have so absolutely become "*second nature*," that, with the ignorance of ourselves which so humiliatingly distinguishes humanity, we cease to be able to detect their presence unless we are aided to do so by witnesses more impartial than ourselves. And this habit of our habits, this custom of our customs, this incapacity of exactly appreciating our manners and our surroundings of every day and every hour, this necessity for making a mental effort before we can precisely judge of the extent and the effect of influences whose very perpetuity leads us to forget them, are in no way limited to our personal ways or acts; they apply with equal force to the material objects amongst which our life is passed. The walls of the room in which we sit, the pictures that hang upon those walls,

the tables and the arm-chairs we use all day, the clock upon the mantelpiece, the books and the odd things that lie about,—all these are so familiar to our eyes that we almost cease to see them. Our habit of them is so thorough that we feel their absence even more than their presence; for most of us are more struck by the sudden disappearance from its accustomed place of an object which we have long seen there, than we were, until that moment, by the constant sight of the object itself. And yet this sort of permanent indifference is accompanied by an undercurrent of singular force, the very existence of which is scarcely suspected by the majority of men and women, whatever be the land they live in. That undercurrent is silently produced in our minds by incessant contact with certain forms and certain colours; and, however ignorant we may be of its operation, it works steadily away below the surface of our observation, and creates in us, without our knowing anything about it, what we call our taste.

Taste can scarcely be said to be a natural faculty; its manifestations have varied so utterly, its theories have been so contradictory, it has always been so unequally developed and distributed amongst the different races of mankind, it is so clearly a fruit of habit and education, that we are justified in regarding it as an acquired and not as an inherent power of our intelligence. Almost every one of the nations of antiquity created a type of taste for its own use, a type which apparently grew slowly through the stages of perfection which the improving capacities of its authors

successively reached, and then faded away and was replaced by something else. Of all the products of ancient taste we have retained the power of admiring only two—Greek architecture and Greek statues. Assyrian bulls with plaited beards, Babylonian lions with wings, Egyptian sphinxes, are examples of a taste which we have lost the possibility of appreciating; our education has set before us other realisations of the idea of beauty, and we are now unable to recognise either charm or truth in types which once were evidently regarded as the highest expression of the then existing laws of both. The people of Nineveh and of Thebes must have learnt to cherish certain forms solely because those forms were set before them for daily contemplation, and because they slowly acquired a habit of particular lines and colours which by sheer force of contact impressed themselves indelibly on their memory, acquired the strength of a conviction, and so directed their national taste in a uniform direction. They, like ourselves, were just as capable of admiration for any other shape as for the special shape they chose; the slow march of habit, with its insidious influences, led them in a certain direction, and they finally reached their apogee of expression in the form of imaginary wild beasts, to which we in our time have grown unfit to accord any other merit than that of a certain massive grandeur.

The same road which led our predecessors to mythological animals has led ourselves to very different convictions on the subject; but habit is our master as it was theirs, and we are forced to recognise that, however changed be the result, it is reached in both cases by the self-same path, by the self-same action of contact and of vision. Taste in shapes and colours can be learnt through the eye alone; the reason-

ing powers have nothing whatever to do with it; it cannot be acquired from books; it is guided by no absolute or durable laws, for it is but the temporary expression of what we like because we are accustomed to it. Such a definition may seem sacrilegious to persons who regard taste as an abstract and eternal quality, essentially true and absolute in itself; but, without going into the question whether there really be, or can be, any such thing as unchanging truth in a feeling whose whole essence is to vary under the influences to which it may be successively subjected, it will probably be acknowledged, without discussion, that the application of taste to the limited class of work which forms the object of this article—to furniture—is necessarily as shift as are the waves of the sea. There are, indeed, some few seemingly constant laws which may appear not to change; curved lines, for instance, look more graceful than straight ones; the paler tints blend more harmoniously than vivid colours; but these apparent principles may, after all, be but transitory like the rest; for who shall venture to assert that straight lines and contrasts of resplendent hues never have been or never will be adopted as the highest expression of taste? Surely the wisest and most honest interpretation of the word is to admit that it only expresses a preference, which exists to-day, which was not yesterday, and may no longer be to-morrow. Art, abstract art, is perhaps controlled by eternal laws, but the same cannot anyhow be said of fugitive evanescent taste.

But, if we accept this meaning, and if, furthermore, we acknowledge that the essentially transitory liking known as "taste" results solely from a temporary habit of certain types and shapes and shades, we reach another question, and are forced to

ask ourselves how it is that the very objects which thus form our taste are themselves perpetually changing, so producing a corresponding modification in our taste as well? The answer evidently is, that two widely-different fancies, taste and fashion, have unhappily grown to be almost synonymous; and that, for many centuries, taste has been a mere slave of fashion, and has been dragged in its trail wherever fashion chose to lead it. Abstractedly, nothing can be more false or more deplorable than this confusion of two ideas which have no necessary connection with each other; but, practically, especially in modern times, fashion has always imposed its will with such relentless vigour, that taste has been reduced to play a part of almost passive obedience, scarcely daring to put in a timid protest now and then against the outrages to which fashion has so frequently subjected it. The mass of us, especially women, tacitly attach the merit of attractiveness to everything that is, for the moment, fashionable, forgetting that the new object, whatever it be, has in no way been created to satisfy what we suppose to be the real laws of taste (if indeed there be any such at all), but solely to stimulate trade by pushing aside previous models and introducing new ones. As society is now constituted, we rarely seek to form any tastes whatever for ourselves; we generally take them ready-made from the upholsterer, the dressmaker, the tailor, and the *modiste*, who naturally keep on modifying them as rapidly as possible, because it is their interest to do so, without feeling the slightest responsibility for the effect which they are producing on contemporaneous habits, and, consequently, on contemporaneous taste. These changes originate especially in France, which has thus gradually

acquired the position of a leader of current taste, and which therefore offers remarkable facilities for an examination of the results produced in our daily life by the influence of that sentiment; or, to speak with more critical exactness, by the influence of the surrounding objects amongst which our life is spent.

Since Louis Quatorze, France has shown us five distinctly-marked periods of fashion. We may count Louis XV. and Louis XVI. as one, for the difference between the products of the two reigns is scarcely striking enough to justify their being separately classed. The Directory introduced a totally new type, which, though it did not exercise any permanent influence on ideas, at all events indicated the point of rupture between the taste of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Then came the Empire, the Restoration, and the Second Empire, each bringing its special models and its special school. Of these five epochs, two only, however, have presented a vivid character of their own; the First Empire was all Roman, the Second Empire was all Utilitarian; the first reflected the sympathies for Cæsar which filled the master's head; the second exhibited the love of material comfort which filled the people's heart. The men of Austerlitz sat at home in straight, square-backed wooden chairs, ornamented with bronze dragons or copper eagles, which were abominably disagreeable, and, according to our actual theories, outrageously ugly too. The present generation, on the contrary, has been supplied with such incredibly agreeable *fauteuils*, so well wadded, so exactly calculated to receive the hollow of the back, that it is difficult to imagine how future manufacturers are to surpass their merit. We have here an advantage which the history of the fluctuations of taste but rarely affords us; we are

able to recognise with precision the cause of the tendencies which sprang up during the two Empires, just as we know that the famous Isabelle yellow came into fashion, at the commencement of the seventeenth century, in imitation of the colour of the innermost garment of Isabelle of Austria, daughter of Philip II., who vowed that she would not change her linen until Ostend was taken, and had to wait three years for that event. The pursuit of ease and of satisfaction of the body being the main agent which has brought about the type of furnishing which at this moment prevails in France, we naturally find an intimate correlation between the habits of our generation and the upholstery which it employs. The demand has created the supply, and the supply reacts upon and strengthens the demand. The case is not one in which manufacturers alone have judged what they would offer for consumption; consumers themselves, contrarily to their ordinary habits, have indicated what they wanted, in general terms at least, and the action of the *tapisier* and the *ébéniste* has been limited to the development and variation of details. The public has shown in this an initiative of which there are few examples, and, in principle, it deserves encouragement and praise for acting for itself, instead of blindly adopting what its habitual purveyors offered it; but the effort has been made with accompanying conditions which deprive it of half its merit. If the French public had simply said, let us have chairs and tables and other necessities, conceived and executed in the fittest form for the use and service which they have to render, there would have been no fault to find; for the highest quality of a material object; whatever it be, is to be absolutely fit for its destination; and the realisation of the word

"comfort," in its largest sense, is evidently the destination of modern furniture. But the French of the Second Empire were not content with fitness; they wanted something else beside: that something else was glitter; and it is because they have called for that, as well as comfort, that their movement has gone wrong.

The worship of material satisfactions is not limited in France to the men of Belleville and their Communistic fellow-citizens in other towns than Paris. It exists as really amongst the middle and upper classes as amongst discontented workmen. Everywhere, with rare exceptions, the object is to attain enjoyment from exterior sources. The *prolétaire* dreams of it in the shape of warm clothes, good dinners, and blue wine, possessed without the pain of labouring to earn them: the people above him call for it not only in thorough comfort, but also in the form of gilded walls, and painted ceilings, and satin curtains, and countless looking-glasses, and all the other brilliancies in which the taste of the last twenty years has revelled. The objection to this disposition is not that it is false in itself—for if it be right to regard all manifestations of taste as mere passing preferences, each of those manifestations is true so long as it lasts—but that it has raised matter to the same height as form, and has renewed in the nineteenth century the old Byzantine folly of measuring the merit of an object by its intrinsic value. It was an enormous progress to have called for comfort and for exact suitability for special uses in all the utensils we employ; but it was an equally enormous error to have simultaneously required gold and splendour, which represent absolutely nothing but money, in no way contribute to render home attributes more adapt-

able to their real purposes, rarely produce any satisfaction to the eye beyond the doubtful attraction of bright light and vivid colour, and incontestably swell up the vanity of the owner. There are, however, people who honestly like to live in over-shining rooms; and though we may think them wrong, both in morals and in art, we have no right to condemn them for their taste. One person may have irresistible proclivities towards the glow of polished gold and the glare of scarlet—another, towards cold grey tin and white deal planks; and yet each may be intensely truthful in his preference. Practical philosophy teaches us that “*le beau est ce qui plait* ;” and though Jouffroy, in imitation of Plato, pretends that beauty lies solely in expression and in truth, in the manifestation of the invisible by the visible, of the higher sentiments of the soul by corporeal form, he has not succeeded in inducing the men and women of France to admit any other theory of beauty than that of pure personal liking. The abstract science for which Baumgarten invented the title of *Æsthetics* will never become popular, in our time at least. People will go on listening to their eyes and to their hearts, and will always be right when they say, “*I like because I like.*” But though it is therefore fair to recognise that, so far as taste is concerned, the defenders of gorgeous decoration may be as absolutely convinced that they are right as others are that they are wrong, their position is open to attack on other and more important grounds.

Here we must revert to the influence of habit which was alluded to just now, for it is precisely the general employment of over-splendour which has generated, in a certain class of French society, artificial necessities of the most damaging

character. Constant contact with exaggerated brightness leads weak minds—the mass of minds are weak—to a final incapacity of supporting the calm and relatively colourless aspect of ordinary homes. To such minds the absence of gilding ends by becoming synonymous with the presence of gloom; excessive use of light and colour produces on them a moral effect analogous to the momentary blindness which we experience after staring at the sun; they lose the faculty of appreciating shades, and unconsciously crave for *tout ce qui brille*. And yet, true as this is in principle, exact as it is in its general application, there is in France a resolute minority which protests against the abuse of white, red, and gold, and their concomitants, which has come in with such a rush since 1852. This minority includes the thinkers, and the artists, and the poets, or, at all events, the people who describe themselves by these three designations; and it angrily complains of the harm done to the younger members of the generation by the lamentable art-teaching to which they are subjected. The majority replies that the first duty of indoor life is to attract, no matter how; that the struggle between outdoor temptations and home joys has grown into one of the great social difficulties of our time; that women are waking up more and more to an appreciation of the fact, that they are fighting with the outer world for the control of men; that society, as it is now composed, can only be held together by the bribe of perpetual excitement; and that the rooms which receive society, the chairs in which women sit, the dinner-tables at which men eat, ought all to contribute, in the highest measure of which they are capable, to the one essential object of attraction. In this sense, walls and furniture are regarded as a frame

which improves a picture. The argument is specious: in another form, indeed, it represents a most important truth, as we shall hereafter see; but, put in this shape, it is altogether beside the question. In reality—and no practised observer of French life, or, at all events, of Paris life, will say the contrary—the result ordinarily sought for in the organisation of a drawing-room is, not to win others to it, but to achieve a brilliancy which satisfies the vanity of its occupant. That is where the harm is done; that is where the unceasing glorification of show tells its own tale, and works out its consequence; it all is vanity. What other meaning can it have? Who can urge that constant excessive brightness brings no fatigue, and that the eye is always satisfied to gaze on luminous colour and coruscating lustre? Who of us would choose, of his own free will, to sit night after night, amidst a hundred candles, reflected from mirrors at every angle, surrounded by universal crimson standing out on dazzling white? That is not what our natures need; our real wants are of a very different kind. Exceptionally, and for the same reason which sometimes leads us to look at fireworks, we may find pleasure in gilt and blaze; but we weary of them fast, and cannot force ourselves to accept them as ordinary home companions. And yet, in most French houses of the better sort, they glare at us with pitiless perseverance, not for our joy, but for the master's.

It is indeed refreshing to turn aside from this too sparkling current into certain rooms where something else than vanity has been at work; where every colour employed suggests the thought of harmony and repose which guided its author's choice; where every material is in its place; where grace, fitness, and, above all, personal expression, are the results

desired. The forms may be almost the same as we see elsewhere, for shape has now attained in Paris a perfection so nearly absolute, that the most exorbitant critics can scarcely improve it. But form, admirable as it may be, does not suffice alone: it needs selected colour to set it off; and, if it were not absurd to say so in talking about furniture, it might almost be added that it needs expression to give it life. Form, colour, and expression, the three elements of beauty, are not solely the attributes of men and women; animals, and even inanimate things, may also possess them. But though many of us may be disposed to avow that there is expression, as well as form and colour, in a violet or a rose, it would be somewhat extravagant to suggest that furniture may possess it too. And yet, when we look round certain houses, does it not almost seem as if the objects in them have natures of their own? Their unity of tone is so thorough, they present such evidences of subtle fancy, that they appear to have acquired character and meaning. Of course they manifest the ruling taste of our time; but, with it, there is something else and something more, something that reveals individual thought and gives almost vitality. In this dining-room there is an atmosphere which we do not often breathe elsewhere. All is dark-brown cloth and ebony; but the weakened daylight which struggles in through the heavy curtains finds resting-places and mark-points on the angles of the old *faïence* which stands upon the dresser, on the steel hinges of the sideboards, and flickers vaguely on the yellow and dull blue of the hanging lamp. Brown walls set in black beading frame in the room, and lend their aid to its austere but grand effect. The drawing-rooms are painted in a tint which the catalogues of colour

do not define—something between a fading China rose and half-ripe Indian corn. Narrow bands of faint pearl-grey surround each panel, and here and there a thin line of gold relieves the gentleness of tone. Chairs of varied shapes, all made for comfort and suited to the position which each sitter may wish to take, stand about in pleasant irregularity. They are clothed in different stuffs of all the finer sorts, so that the varying sheen of damask, silks, and satins may prevent the uniformity of one material; they are embroidered with fantastic flowers of every hue, but calculated so that each shall mingle with and neutralise the other, the object being to subordinate each part to the whole effect. As the French say, “nothing screams,” for all fits well together. And plants with variegated leaves, and books whose very binding has been calculated for the place it has to occupy, and the thousand trifles which lie about, and the work-basket from which skeins of wool are cunningly allowed to overflow, because their colours will serve a purpose, and the laced handkerchief left trailing there in the angle of a sofa, in order to light up by its whiteness a too dark corner—all these things show thought, all are contrived with skill and art, with the one object of creating a thoroughly charming room, where the *banalité* of to-day has never entered, but where the mistress asserts herself in her own handiwork. Now go to the bedroom, and from the doorway absorb it with your eyes, for never have you seen a picture more complete. The walls, the hangings, and the seats, are all in pale-blue satin (she is fair), edged sparingly with velvet of the same shade, and embroidered daintily with pale moss-rose buds, swathed in still paler yellow leaves. But this description, though exact, gives no idea of the effect produced by that wondrous

tissue, of the incredible effect of delicacy and thorough feminine elegance which it sheds around. The room is filled with a vague floating perfume of charm and grace; its every detail is combined to aid and sustain the almost fairy aspect it presents. The bed is shrouded in thickly-wadded satin curtains, inside which hang others made of muslin so vaporously filmy that its folds seem almost mist; the coverlet, which hides the lace-trimmed sheets and pillows, is in blue satin lined with eider down, and covered with the same veil of floating white, hanging down in a deep flounce over the woodwork of the bed. The toilette-table is the same—a nestling maze of transparency and lace, with blue beneath, and knots and streamers of mingled satin and velvet round. On the chimney-piece stand a clock and candlesticks of Sèvres china. The piano is in pale *bois de rose* (not rosewood, which is a very different substance), inlaid with plates of painted Sèvres to match. At night light comes from above, where hangs a lamp, of Sèvres again. In our day, with our actual ideas and actual wants, such rooms as these are typical; they represent the highest form of realisation of modern taste without its faults, or rather, with as little of them as is consistent with the expenditure of so much money and so much thought. In these rare cases, vanity seeks for another satisfaction than that of glare, but vanity is at the bottom all the same; the only difference is that it is accompanied by a true sense of art.

Bright or graceful furnishing being a monopoly of the rich—that is to say, of a few thousand families in France—it follows that all these considerations are true of those families alone, and that they have scarcely any application to the mass of the population. The habit of poverty and

simplicity renders it relatively easy to dispense with elegance; for though there are certain natures which instinctively pine after it though they have never possessed it, the rule incontestably is that in this, as in so many other things, "*l'appétit vient en mangeant*;" contact with pretty objects teaches us to like them. Here again habit produces its effect. But this same habit which, in the one case, raises the level of needs, and with it the faculty of appreciating everything which satisfies those needs, produces, in the other case, an exactly opposite effect, for it aids to maintain undiminished the roughness of life and manner which is generally coupled with roughness of home fittings. It is needless to consider here which of the two is the cause of the other; that question is outside our present subject: but it is certain that whereas delicate surroundings conduce to delicate ways and movements, coarse furniture contributes to coarse habits. Here it is that we detect the secret influence of furniture on home life. A man smokes his pipe in a hovel and spits upon the earthen floor; but something would prevent him from doing either in a carpeted drawing-room. Travellers sometimes lie down upon the dining-table in a roadside wine-shop; but the same people would act otherwise in a Paris *appartement*. Amongst all the peasantry of Europe tidy cottages are signs of improving manners and of growing gentleness of thought; and, whether it be as a cause or as a consequence, furniture marches upwards with education. This fact, however, is general, not national; it exists everywhere, and is no more special to France than it is to England or to any other country. It is not amongst the French poorer classes that we find any peculiar results or any local influences produced by the habit of particular objects; the rich alone supply a field of observation on the

subject, and show us marked tendencies and manners accompanying a marked class of furniture. It is, however, just to add, that the sudden collateral development during the last twenty years of much vanity and much gilding—taking gilding as the type of the entire movement—has certainly been aided by the rapid progress which has simultaneously occurred in the upholsterer's art and means of action. Universal exhibitions and what is called industrial art came in with the Second Empire, just at the moment when quickly-acquired fortunes called for material enjoyments: demand and supply arose together. This part of the subject merits consideration.

Before 1851 French furniture had attained the reputation of being superior, both in design and execution, to that of all other countries. An impartial witness, M. Echelhauser, representative of the Zollverein, said, in his report on the first London Exhibition, that "the opinion of all connoisseurs recognises unanimously and formally that the French are victors in this competition. Purity of tone, harmony of composition and ornament, choice of materials, of colour, and of the special qualities of each article of furniture, suitability of style to the destination in view, incomparable ability in workmanship as regards both carpentry and sculpture, a happy disposition of decoration which avoids excess, original inspiration—all these qualities united, make the section of French furniture one of the most striking in the Exhibition." It must be owned that such a position as is here described supplied a vigorous point of departure for the creations of the Second Empire. At the Paris Show of 1855 the success of France was still more evident; it was attested by singular purity and simplicity of forms, by the growing abandonment

of purposeless ornamentation, by the increased use of animals, birds, flowers, and other nature-subjects, for the sculptured details, in place of Cariatides and so-called classic designs; and, above all, by the strict appropriation of each object to the use for which it was designed. Delicacy and grace, easy and convenient usage, a constantly-increasing choice of woods and stuffs, were the striking features of the second Exposition. Mahogany and rose-wood (*palissandre*) ceased to be the main elements employed. Ebony, and its admirable imitation, blackened pear-wood; the brilliant products of Algeria, such as thuja (which mainly supplied the cabinetmakers of Imperial Rome), *lentisque*, cedar, and olive; grey maple, amaranth, the lemon-tree, and the so-called violet,—supplied an infinite variety of resources, of which the most intelligent advantage was taken. The thuja especially, of which the importation does not date back more than twenty years, is as magnificent a substance as can well be imagined. The richness of its golden brown, the *moiré* of its veins, the capricious elegance of its spots, the fineness and the firmness of its grain, its sparkling polish, and the inalterability of its fibre, combine to put it first amongst the elements of *marqueterie*. Simultaneously the manufacture of stuffs and tapestries took an enormous stride. The famous tissues made at Neuilly in imitation of Beauvais and Aubusson, the *moquettes*, the *cretonnes*, assumed a variousness of design which made them begin to look like new inventions; while the list of habitual fabrics was increased by the adoption for men's bedrooms, billiard-rooms, and other simple usages, of coarse grey canvas, with straight or zigzag ornaments in coloured woollen braid. Almost at the same moment appeared the galvanoplastic

applications, which rendered it so easy to employ metals for certain indoor purposes; and with them came those wondrous imitations of old French and Italian earthenware which have raised French products even higher than those of Minton.

With such an abundance of materials, and with an equally abundant call for new furniture suited to the new tastes which had sprung up, it is not strange that the Second Empire should have marked a strongly-accentuated phase in the history of home decoration. A society was formed for the encouragement of art applied to industry: utility and practical suitableness were the fundamental conditions of its action; but it sought to graft the highest attainable art development on the especially utilitarian tendencies of the moment. Its annual exhibitions, though relatively small, brought together admirable collections of high-class work in all the branches of furniture; and though it cannot be said to have influenced the character of either consumption or production as a whole, it indisputably aided to raise the higher products of the upholsterer's and cabinetmaker's art to a higher level still. These exhibitions were visited by large numbers of persons, whose object generally was not only to amuse themselves and to pass a pleasant hour sauntering amidst pretty things, but also to improve their own notions of the elements of ornament, of the means by which they can be best set forth, and of the rules which, however transitorily, now regulate their employment. Unfortunately the prices of the greater part of the objects shown was far beyond the limit of ordinary purses, so that most of the admiring lookers-on had to content themselves with contemplation instead of possession; the lesson to the eye was therefore momentary and not dur-

able. But on real art-lovers, of whom there are a good many amongst the educated classes in France, the impression made was real: it had the eminently practical result of awakening in them the desire to imitate, at lower cost, what had most struck and tempted them in the show. This does not mean that they went away with the unworthy idea of ordering third-rate copies of high-class work, but that, having well studied a type attained by expensive means, they called upon their own imaginations to invent an analogous result with simpler and consequently cheaper materials. The theory that the general effect of a room exclusively depends on the richness of the woods and stuffs of which its furniture is composed, is certainly very widespread in France; it reigns there as a natural consequence of the odious white, red, and gold mania which is still in force: but there is a growing minority which, as has been already said, thinks and acts for itself, and which, while it in no way discards expensive substances, asserts that many of the best effects of tone and character which furnishing is capable of producing, are obtainable exclusively by its simpler and cheaper agents. Here, however, there is some confusion in the French view. It does not appear to establish a sufficiently radical distinction between the results brought out by these two means of action: it seems to lean towards the idea that their effects can be rendered virtually identical, not, of course, in fact, but in the quantity and nature of the enjoyment which the view of each of them produces in the beholders.

The whole influence of furniture on home life, its rôle as a medium of education, and especially its action in the formation of taste by daily contact, are in reality involved in this one question of comparative

effects. If it could be urged that satin and chintz, sculptured buffets and plain deal cupboards, embroidered *fauteuils* and straw chairs, delicately-painted panels and coarse paper walls, all create in us the same emotions, all satisfy our eyes to the same degree, then evidently it would be folly to pretend that there is any teaching in the subject, or that any signs of national character can be detected in it. But as it may be fairly taken for granted that no educated person will assert that he is insensible to such contrasts; as, on the contrary, every one will probably acknowledge, though in different degrees, that he is accessible to distinct and various impressions provoked by the aspect of the room in which he is, that acknowledgment is enough to prove the reality of the argument that we are all of us, more or less, morally and materially influenced by the objects which constantly surround us. And if this be true as a general rule, it is especially so of such emotional, sensational people as the French, and, more particularly still, of that part of them of whom we have just been speaking who go about seeking for new ideas to realise. It is on this class—a limited one, it is true—that the art exhibitions of the last twenty years have exercised their full effect; it is amongst its members that we must seek for the highest manifestations of thought in modern furnishing, because it is they alone who have struggled against the meretricious splendours of the Second Empire, and have steadily maintained that Art, properly so called, leads us in a very different direction from that which modern taste has pursued. It is therefore to be regretted that many of these champions of truth do not more explicitly distinguish the natures and proportions of the pleasure to be derived from the sight of each class of de-

coration. Pure brilliancy, of which we see so much in France, rarely satisfies even the outward eye; it never carries its impression to the head, far less to the heart; its predominant effect on us is to weary, excepting always such of us as like it, which every one is free to do. Well-studied, calculated elegance may attain a very high degree of perfectness; but if it be elegance alone, with no living thought behind it, it chills us easily, and sets us wondering what it is that is not there. Besides, unless excessive elegance be manipulated by a master-hand, it degenerates too easily into frivolity, and it almost always has the grave defect of sacrificing the aspect of the whole to little considerations of mere detail. At the same time it must be owned that there are to be found in the employment of the brighter tissues, of the lighter colours, of the Pompadour type of ornamentation, resources of admirable value, especially for use by candle-light. It is not possible to combine a room the effect of which shall be equally complete by day and night; it is necessary to select one or other of the two sorts of illumination, and to be guided by its laws. As drawing-rooms are ordinarily used in France rather in the evening than in the afternoon, it may be admitted that, as a rule, they ought to be furnished for artificial light. If so, the use of pale shades of satin and damasked silk is easy to defend. But while we may admit this theory for drawing-rooms and for a lady's bedroom, it is impossible to even listen to such a word as elegance when applied to dining-rooms or libraries; and this inadaptability of the word to all the uses of a house proves at once that elegance alone will not supply the right solution. Furthermore, both brilliancy and elegance are somewhat in contradiction with thor-

ough fitness. It is easy to conceive an article of furniture—a bed, a chair, a table—which in form shall be absolutely suitable for its end, but of which the use shall become impossible, because it possesses too much splendour for that use. Ordinary furniture, such as we see in second and third rate houses everywhere, is simply serviceable, and nothing else: it provokes no feeling in us, excepting some regret that so many people should remain indifferent to the contentment of the eye and to the unconscious development of their taste which a more careful choice of their belongings would afford them.

Here, then, are three sorts of furnishing, plentiful enough in Paris—sheer shininess, intense elegance, and commonplace. Each provokes in us a different appreciation, but not one of them is satisfactory either to an artist or to a student of the joys of home, amongst which a well-imagined, well-executed *ameublement* ought to occupy a front rank. The French feel instinctively the truth of this latter fact, as was shown just now when speaking of their argument of "attraction;" but, as was then observed, they most of them distort the question, because they rest it on vanity instead of heart. Pure love of home, for its own sake, is the one ground on which a perfect realisation of home adornment can be based. No one can make a thorough home for anybody but himself. The slightest desire to awaken the admiration of others enfeebles individuality of conception, and introduces into what should be an exclusively personal work, that miserable pandering to other people's approbation, which, in England as well as in France, is called vanity. There are cases—though not many of them—where the entire self of the inhabitant is put in evidence in his habitation. It is in-

deed a privilege to find such homes, for they alone enable us to exactly judge of character by its manifestation in the choice of furniture. Money is indispensable for these realisations of personality; but it is astonishing to see how the highest natures of effect can sometimes be attained with a relatively limited expenditure. The salient characteristics of such work as this are the subordination of ornament to utility, the relation between the character of the ornament and that of the material employed, and the entire subjection of detail to the whole effect. Sobriety is its striking feature; elegance ceases to be a result, and is used only as a means; brilliancy is utterly discarded excepting as a source of necessary light in certain spots. These conditions are, however, only general; it is in their application that thought comes out, that each separate nature stamps its mark. Some few men—and women even more—will tell you, over in Paris, that their furniture is the child of long reflection, of careful analysis, of patient comparisons; the one object being to produce a material demonstration of themselves. They will say to you, in the curious words of Wolowski, who from his Professorship of Political Economy has grown to be Deputy for Paris, that “the principle of their taste springs from the spirit and the soul instead of being the slave of instinct and the senses;” they will idealise the subject; will speak of it as one of the truest forms of practical art; and especially will insist, perhaps even to exaggeration, on the immense importance of the eye-teaching which furniture is now called upon to distribute.

In cases such as these we must naturally be prepared to find everything in its place, to recognise in each room a marked fitness for its duty. We shall no more discover

cloth or velvet in a drawing-room than we shall see satin in a dining-room, or pale-tinted walls in a library. The exigencies of the epoch, translated into the loftiest language of which they are susceptible, call for certain unities which are only obtainable by the adoption of certain materials for each use. In France, certain rooms alone authorise the employment of the more delicate substances; others need the graver tones of woollen tissues; others again claim printed cottons and plain painted tables, drawers, and chairs. Side by side with these conditions stands the law which necessitates the use of apparent wood in dining-rooms, and which prohibits it almost entirely in drawing-rooms, where both ease and grace are only attainable by covering up all seats with wadded stuffs which hide their frames. No word-painting can convey a sense of the result produced when theories like these are realised in all their fullness, when every detail is absolutely perfect, but when no detail strikes the eye because all is merged in the common whole. Sight, and nothing else, can carry the picture to our brain. And in such cases the finish of the accessories is worthy of all the rest: there are no “faults of spelling,” however small. The earthenware is of a lightness unknown in England, where, whether an object be in metal-work, in crockery, or in wood, there is usually a massiveness, a waste of matter, which may give useless strength, but which certainly destroys all grace. The dishes, plates, and knives are all considerably smaller than those employed on this side of the Channel; the tints chosen for the decoration of the table services are carefully adapted to the colours of the furniture of the dining-room; while their patterns and designs are kept down to the gentlest outlines so as to

create no distraction for the eye. The ornamentation of the table is a triumph of good sense and knowledge; it ought indeed to be always so, for the science of adornment offers but few occasions of equal interest, as all artist-minded Frenchwomen are well aware. It shows character and breadth of composition, with ample space and no crowding or excess of detail; there is harmony between the hues of glass, and flowers, and dessert (the Russian service is the only one now used in France); the whole aspect is one of gaiety mixed with calm: as all the lighting comes from lamps and candles suspended overhead, the eye is not dazzled, it suffers no fatigue, and ranges over the entire table because every ornament is kept low so as not to mask the diners from each other. The calculation of effect at table is so profound a question, and is so keenly felt by certain women, that it comes into evidence sometimes in the subtlest forms. A lady told her servant that six people were coming that night to dinner, that as they all were friends it was not necessary to spend ten francs for flowers, and that, therefore, the green ferns in daily use would do for the centrepiece; "but," she added, "as we shall consequently have no brilliancy in the middle, take care to choose the bonbons and the cakes of vivid colours so as to compensate its absence, otherwise the table will look dull." There is a delicacy in this conception which is beyond ordinary thought. If from the dining-room we look elsewhere, we notice that the frames of the pictures and the mirrors are lighter and more soberly modelled than those which we use here; that the marble chimney-tops are all covered with silk, or cloth, or velvet, according to the furniture in the room; that crisp white curtains hang inside the others

in every window and over every bed; that in the lustres, and the candelabra, and the branches, are candles which have been lighted for ten minutes, because a candle which has served gives an inhabited and useful look which a brand new one in no way supplies; that all the lamps are full of oil, and wait only to be lighted. Brightness, comfort, and practical utility are everywhere.

But, alas! such perfect realisations of home skill are very rare. In a large acquaintance one may, with good-luck, find half-a-dozen of them, and not all of equal merit. The rule is, in Paris, that all rooms are alike, that they contain the same inevitable Second-Empire products, and, in the country, that people sit in the seats of their grandfathers and think it is all right. Personality is an attribute of the few; the mass takes what it finds, imagines that there is nothing better, and so loses the education and the enjoyment which it would attain by thinking and selecting for itself. Nine-tenths, or rather ninety-nine hundredths, of the population is unable to comprehend the very smallest part of what the other hundredth thinks; the influence of habit is too deep and constant to permit them to recognise either the deficiencies of their own condition, or the advantages of other systems. Their taste—for it is just as much a taste as any that the very highest art-sympathies can provoke—accustoms them to what they have, and they are content with it: all we can do is to "leave them alone," as the lotos-eaters said, and hope that they will open their eyes some day, and learn that they can do better.

And now let us consider what are the effects produced by the various types of indoor aspect on the persons submitted to their influence. Let us first take children, and see what they are taught by them: they

afford the easiest ground to study, because they have no prejudices in the matter, because they are virgin of all convictions, because they are even more susceptible than grown-up people of extraneous action, and because their faculty of absorption of impressions by mental capillarity is extremely great. These two latter conditions are important in a work where contact is the only agent, and where results are unconsciously attained. A child accustomed from its babyhood to either of the extremes of furniture, to common idealless objects, or to the highest perfections of art-combination, will naturally acquire a degree of taste-education in proportion to the silent teaching to which it is thus submitted. It may possess innate dispositions which, in after life, will modify the fruit of that first education; but it cannot be denied that, whilst still a child, it will, without knowing why, support the neighbourhood of ugliness more easily in one case than in the other. This is a first consequence, and a palpable one, of the contrast which we are supposing, and it probably acts in two directions, negatively as well as positively, for many of us have noticed cases in which a peasant's child has been almost as unable to reconcile its gaze to the elegancies of the chateau, as the chatelaine's girl to bring down hers to the rough details of the cottage. And it is useless to pretend that this is but a consequence of shyness and timidity, and that unconscious habit or taste, its synonym, have no hand in it. That might possibly be true if the poorer of the two children alone drew back from the contact of new objects, but it is precisely the richer one—the one whose taste has acquired the greater force and the more solid conviction—whose sense shrinks most, and whose eyes feel the most dissatisfaction. Surely

there is evidence here of the reality of the schooling in which each has lived, and of the different lessons learnt from that schooling. Neither of the children could define the motive of its emotion, but both of them would distinctly feel it, and would manifest it without knowing why. The girl or boy who grows up amidst harmonies of form and colour, and intelligent application of material, imbibes therefrom a spontaneous notion of what is meant by practical taste in its everyday uses; and it is not going too far to say that the art-dispositions of such a child are fined down, and are rendered more delicate and more subtle, by early association with good models, and that its power of appreciating the beauties of nature is, in consequence, strengthened and extended. To a good many people this may seem like dreaming, but if they will make an effort to remember how easily young minds receive the impress of surrounding sights, they may perhaps admit that there is truth in it.

When a child has once acquired the power of distinguishing clearly between what pleases it and what does not, it is in a condition to form for itself its first theory of taste. It may modify it afterwards, but our early apprenticeship is never thrown away; and it has the advantage of habituating the mind to the idea that taste originally results from habit. In later years comparison comes into play, and then begin in each of us those strange successive changes of opinion which alone would suffice to prove how variable and shifting are our maturer views upon the subject, and how impossible it is to lay down, from year to year, any unvarying definition. But this very versatility has its use; it exercises the imagination, it stimulates the pursuit of novelty, it provokes in-

telligent competition between the manufacturers of furniture, it opens a healthy field of action for the employment of fortune, it renders luxury justifiable. And, more than all, it extends the field of action of daily art-teaching by the multiplication and the variety of the lessons which it places at our disposal. There may be—indeed there is—a large mass of men and women who go about from house to house with careless eyes and inattentive perceptions, who never profit by what they see, and who indeed are incapable of supposing that there is anything round them to profit by. But there is in France (and perhaps elsewhere) another class which seeks instruction and enjoyment in all the acts and sights of life, which thinks that nothing is too small to learn from or to look for, which remembers that charming flowers are often hidden in the shade, and that the science of life lies rather in the diligent extraction of satisfactions from ordinary sources than in the pursuit of exceptional excitements. These are the people to whom a perfectly organised room speaks audibly in a language of its own; these are the people who will attempt, and often with success, to give a diagnosis of your character from a simple examination of your furniture; and though the assertion that such a faculty can be acquired may not improbably provoke an incredulous smile amongst those whose organisation does not lean that way, the fact is absolutely true. Children to whom such theories have been explained by their mothers, and who have thus obtained an early intuition of their meaning, pick up by habit and practice a power of observation and of retention of details, of comparison and consequently of judgment, which is of the highest value as an agent of education. It is not unusual to hear a French girl of twelve or

fifteen years old accurately describe a complicated object of which she has barely caught sight for a few seconds. For instance, she will depict, in its most elaborate particulars, the entire dress—boots, watch, and pocket-handkerchief included—of a lady who has simply passed her in the street—a complicated object enough in those times. She will tell you, in reply to your curious questions as to how she did it, “Oh, I undressed her at a glance.” She does not need to look twice; her perceptive organs have grown so acute, her classification of impressions is so instantaneous, that she absorbs without an effort; and the astonishing minuteness and correctness of her dissection is as striking as the rapidity with which it is performed.

This is a great power to possess. It reacts on the intelligence in many ways, especially in strengthening the analytical faculties. Of course it may be denied that it is a product of early contact with art-teaching, and of the precocious development of taste by the mere effect of surrounding objects; but what is its cause if it be not that? France is, as yet, the only country in which questions of this kind have provoked practical results as well as theoretical interest; it is there alone that, as a rule, we find this ready quickness, this rapid observation. If they were a special property of the race, we should discover them everywhere, more or less; but we detect them solely amongst the educated, and only there in certain cases of which the history can generally be traced back to a point of departure based on home art in some kind of way. We need not, however, seek to build an argument on these exceptions, for the mass of the population supplies all the evidence we want, though of course in a less striking form. The character of the home in

which they live leaves its impress on the majority of the people: it is true that there are many natures which are utterly insensible to influences of such a kind, just as there are ears which have no care for music, and eyes which are unable to distinguish red from yellow; but the rule in France is, that each distinct class of furniture makes a mark on those who use it, and exercises a perceptible action on their manners and aspirations. People whose chairs and tables date from the Consulate, who possess one dim looking-glass, a cuckoo clock, and no carpet, cannot anyhow be identical in their views of life or their fashion of expressing them with families of 1871, whose *fauteuils* exude softness and friendship, who regard bright light as a necessity of life, and who hate imitations of bird cries. The former will probably be sternly virtuous; the latter will be by no means stern, and possibly not virtuous either, but they will be pleasant, and "of their epoch." Wooden furniture is provocative of lofty principles, and of what we should call in England Low-Church tendencies; while padded sofas and their adjuncts may be said to conduce to worldly views, and to no Church tendencies at all. But where would be the use of their faculty of resistance to temptation if our neighbours let themselves be beaten by arm-chairs? Are we necessarily constrained to own that their morals are enfeebled by over-comfort, and that the vigour of their character has diminished in proportion with the development of their elegance? That the French have gone down the hill is an accepted fact; that the lust for material satisfaction is one of the causes of their decline, does certainly look probable; but if it be so, we need only deduce therefrom that the arguments against pure brilli-

ancy and pure elegance which have been put forward here are real, and that modern taste alone has done the harm. All this, however true it may be, proves nothing against art. It indicates, on the contrary, that safety lies in a return to higher principles of decoration, and in the abandonment of the coarser satisfactions of the eye. It is but a small side of a great question, and yet it has its weight; the regeneration of what was once a noble people might be aided by a reform in furniture, by a vigorous expurgation of sham splendours and of everlasting appeals to wretched vanities.

And yet, though, in the name of art and elevated feeling and national improvement, we condemn the furnishing of the Second Empire, the feebler elements of our nature do find pleasant features in it. As moralists, as artists, as philosophers, as political economists, we are bound to say it is too full of gaud and glitter; but as men and women with human weaknesses, we cannot help acknowledging that it does make life more cheery than it used to be when we were young. After all, brightness and warmth and softness do help to unsadden weary hearts, do aid to make manners gentle, do stimulate gaiety in young children, do frame in love. There is many a house in France where the whole aspect of indoor life is lighted up by the fitting of the rooms, where the home-tie grows stronger under the influence of satisfied and contented taste, where the husband comes in gaily from his work, eager to look once more at the charming picture in which his wife is the central object. Honestly let us own that, when a man feels of his own home that it offers him more attraction than any other place on earth, it is a sign that good causes are at work; and let us hesitate before we apply a

sweeping condemnation to a system which, whatever be its faults, has merits too. What we may wisely hope for is, that present practices may cease with the cessation of the circumstances which produced them; that grave events may make taste graver though not less winning to ordinary natures; that art may drive out gewgaws; that the more delicate forms of furniture may gradually descend into common use,

and carry their civilising influence everywhere. Thus far that influence applies to the upper classes only: increasing cheapness of production, coupled with increasing needs in the lower strata of society, may propagate it widely; and some day future students of the history of civilisation may recognise the real importance of the part which furniture has played in the moral progress of the nineteenth century.

THE TWO MRS SCUDAMORES.—CONCLUSION.

CHAPTER V.

AFTER this terrible day things fell into something like their ordinary channel at Scudamore. The little woman who had brought so much trouble into the house came downstairs, and was known among the children as Aunt Thomas. It was the name they all gave her. She was a hesitating little woman, doubtful exceedingly about all her actions, prone to ask advice, and accept it gratefully, even from little Mary, who was but seven years old. Mary was Aunt Thomas's Christian name, and she took doubly to the child, who led her about everywhere like an obedient slave. Very soon even the grown-up children, even Amy and her brother, accepted the new relationship with the unquestioning matter-of-course facility of youth. They made no inquiries into it. They accepted Aunt Thomas with simplicity and sincerity; everything that was mysterious in it was explained by the fact that she had lived most of her life abroad. It was natural to believe that a woman whose days had been passed so far away should be ignorant of the kind of habits they had been brought up in, and the Scudamore "ways."

And then it was not denied that Mrs Thomas Scudamore had been "raised from the ranks." The children grumbled a little at first, Charlie especially, who complained to everybody but his mother that Aunt Thomas was a bore. But by degrees this passed away, and before she had been there a fortnight Aunt Thomas was the favourite of the house. She had ceased to weep, and her funny little nose had recovered its natural colour, and her eyes were no longer muddled. When she came to her natural aspect it became apparent that she was one of those women who, without a good feature, by mere stress of youth and bloom and smiles, are often very pretty when they are young, and do not grow ugly as great beauties sometimes do, but retain a certain shadow of good looks as long as good-humour and health last them. Her eyes were kindly-smiling eyes when they were not red with crying; and though the thin little curls she wore under her cap were not pretty, yet they were old-fashioned, which of itself is a quality. It was something, Charlie said, to have an aunt who had strength of mind to

wear little curls half-way down her cheeks. As for little Alice and Mary, they took possession of Aunt Thomas with scarcely a moment of doubt. They might be seen leading her about the park, one at each hand, every day of their lives. They seated her between them on the grass when they made daisy chains, or fought each other with plantains. They called her back as if she had been a dog, when she strayed away from them. She set their little bits of worsted-work to rights for them, and dressed their dolls. In their society she was as gay as themselves, and almost as much like a child.

Mrs Scudamore, however, did not settle down to the new relationship so easily. She had never been the same since that day. She had been then a young woman, comparatively, notwithstanding all her troubles. Her cheek had been round, her hair as brown as Amy's; now, not all at once, but by stealthy imperceptible degrees, she had grown grey, her cheek had grown hollow, her eyes sunken, her temper uncertain. Sometimes a word would rouse her into irritation; sometimes she would sit for hours together, her head bent over some pretence at work, but doing nothing, finding in it only a shield and cover for her sadness. Sometimes, on the contrary, she would take wild fits of activity. The children after the first made little remark, but accepted this also, as children do accept the faults of their parents. Even Charlie was too loyal to his mother to speak openly of the change. He said, with a sigh, that the house was no longer jolly—that it was hard upon a fellow to be shut up like this—that he wished "the long" was over, and he back at Oxford. As for Amy, who had no Oxford to go to, and whose idea of duty forbade her to question whether home was or was not "jolly;" she said

very little one way or another, but from the depth of her gentle heart was sorry for "poor mamma." This secret which she was carrying the weight of, which was not her own, was the thing that had done it; and a tinge of bitterness came to Amy's heart as she reflected upon this legacy which her father had left behind him. Girls who have had a hard father have two ways of regarding men—either with disgust, as the oppressors of life; or with a longing, romantic worship, an ideal and vague hope to find somewhere the man who will contradict this tradition of misery, and prove all the heart longs to believe of excellence and love. Amy was of this latter order. She was a sanguine creature, hopeful of everything; and she was sure that it remained to her to find the prince of men, as sure as if she had been nurtured upon nothing but optimism and romantic visions. With this certainty in her mind, a deeper pity still, a more melting tenderness, came over her when she thought of "poor mamma." For Amy's ideal was something more than a hope. Since her earliest recollection she had known one who in her youthful eyes appeared the very antitype of the Red-Cross Knight, and this hero had been absent for some time on his travels, thus giving the last touch of perfection. She had never said to herself that she was the Una of this reproachless gentleman; but a consciousness of some fairy link between them was very sweet at her heart—no wonder she sighed for poor mamma.

Mrs Scudamore avoided Mrs Thomas's society as much as it was possible; but when they were together she treated her with a deference which no one could understand. She deferred to her in everything; she gave up her own convenience, her own way, to hers whenever she had a

chance. That, it is true, was not often, for Mrs Thomas was very humble, very deprecating, taking nothing upon herself, and considerably frightened of her sister-in-law. She would steal away to the nursery, or to her own room, when Mrs Scudamore came down-stairs. They were rarely together; when they were, Mrs Scudamore's temper was, perhaps, more uncertain than usual. She exhorted the children to be good to their aunt and seek her society; but yet, it appeared, could not bear to see them respond to her injunctions. A shadow would cross her face when she saw little Mary dragging the kind aunt after her, demanding with unceremonious freedom everything from her. Whatever her object was in establishing Mrs Thomas in her family, she had accomplished it, and now she could not bear it. A concealed bitterness was in every word she said—a sword was in her heart. She resisted even the love of her own. Sometimes she would send her little girls angrily away, bidding them go to Aunt Thomas, "as you call her." This was done in Amy's presence; and Mrs Scudamore's bitter repentance and regret for having thus betrayed herself, was terrible to the grieved and disturbed mind of poor Amy. "She is Aunt Thomas, is not she, mamma?" she had cried in her first surprise. "Yes, yes," Mrs Scudamore cried, with sharp pain, which Amy did not understand. She could not even stop herself when Aunt Thomas came in. She went on in spite of herself—"She is a stranger to you," she cried, only half conscious what she was saying; "but already she takes my place, even with you."

"Oh, mamma!" said Amy, too much stunned for speech.

"Yes," said Mrs Scudamore beside herself, turning her passionate, pale face to the interloper. "Oh

why, why is it! We ought to have been enemies and hated each other; that was natural—everything was natural except this——"

"But I don't hate you," said Mrs Thomas, with the restrained ghost of a sob.

What was in Mrs Scudamore's face? Was it hatred, was it enmity? This thing at least is certain, it was pain—pain like that Prometheus felt when the vultures were gnawing at his heart. She rose and hurried from the room with her heart swelling as if it would burst. And no one knew why it was. Amy, who would have felt that she was betraying her mother had she consulted even Aunt Thomas on the subject, could not help looking at her wistfully at this strange moment. The little woman put up her hands with a kind of terror.

"Oh don't ask me any questions—don't ask me!" she said. "It has been her own doing bringing me here. And I am content; I am quite happy; only ask me no questions, for I will not say a word."

"I could not ask any questions about mamma," said Amy, proudly, "except from mamma herself."

And Aunt Thomas dried her eyes and nodded and grew bright again. "I am not one of the clever ones," she said; "and I have been long out of the world, and they say I am weakminded; but if you don't do wrong, Amy, it is always my opinion things will come right at the end."

"I hope so, Aunt Thomas," said Amy in her ignorance.

"And we are not doing wrong," said the little woman. "No, thinking it all over, from every side, as I do every night of my life—No—I can't think we are wrong; but, Amy, don't ask me any questions, for I will tell you nothing, not if you were to keep on asking for ever and ever."

Once more Amy looked at her anxiously. Whatever it was, this secret which weighed on the mother was known to the stranger and not to Mrs Scudamore's own child. The thought made Amy's heart sick.

All this time she had said nothing about Mr Tom Furness; she had not given her mother his message; she had kept perfect silence as to her interview with him. This was partly because Mrs Scudamore had been out of the way at the moment, and a thing which is not told at first, gathers difficulties and embarrassments about it every hour it waits. And he had not returned. This curious fact was one of the chief causes, had Amy but known it, of her mother's anxiety. His silence looked as if some plot was brewing, and Mrs Scudamore knew, though the children did not, how precarious her position was. Aunt Thomas had been about two months in the house, and autumn had come, before there was any news of him. And then he came as suddenly as he had done at first, startling the whole house. Amy had been out with Aunt Thomas on an expedition down to the village when he made his appearance. He came upon them quite unexpectedly, appearing round the corner, with his air of swagger yet conscious imperfection. Mrs Thomas saw him first, and she gave a start, and clutched at Amy's dress for protection. "Oh, don't leave me, my dear—don't leave me," she cried; "here is Tom."

"Who is Tom?" said Amy, haughtily, feeling all the blood of all the Scudamores in her veins. But her fit of pride did not last long; and with a certain half-guilty sense of curiosity she gave her companion her arm, feeling herself on the eve of some discovery. She did not even lift the thick gauze veil over her face, and the stranger did not recognise her. This fact increased

the half-painful, half-exciting certainty that something was about to be found out.

"Ah, Auntie!" Mr Tom said, jauntily flourishing his cane, "here you are again. You have given us all the slip; but natural affection is not to be balked, you know."

"I am sure I am—glad to see—any one, Tom——" faltered Mrs Thomas.

"You would be much more glad, I should think, never to see me again," he replied; "but don't flatter yourself, Auntie. I took your case in hand, and I will see you through it, whether you choose or not. I have not been idle since I was last here."

Mrs Thomas trembled more and more with every word. "I am glad to hear—you have not been idle, Tom. I hope it has been—nice work. I—I always felt sure you would make your way."

The stranger laughed an insolent laugh. "You are not clever enough for that sort of thing," he said. "You know well enough what my work has been. I have been finding out all about you."

"I am not afraid of anything that can be found out about me," she said, with a flush of indignation; and then added, faltering, "I am doing nothing wrong."

Again Mr Tom Furness laughed; and it seemed to Amy as if his laugh woke up echoes over all the country—echoes which mocked and sneered as he did—as if they, too, had some occult knowledge. "I admire your conscience, Auntie," he said: "not wrong to give yourself out for some one else—to call yourself out of your name? but you don't suppose that you take me in with your masquerade. And there are more interests than yours involved. This sort of nonsense is not going to last. I should think by this time you ought to be sick

of it yourself; and I've come to make a change."

"Sir," said Amy, interposing, as she felt Mrs Thomas quiver and shake, "you forget whom you are speaking to. You may be her relation, but you have no right to talk to my aunt so."

The man started. And as she threw back her veil and looked at him with indignation in her face, a sudden change came over him. He took off his hat: his manner altered all at once.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Scudamore," he said; "I did not know you were there."

Amy took courage from this sudden victory. It gave her—how could she help it?—a certain thrill of satisfaction to see her own power. "Indeed, I don't think it matters whether I am here or not," she said, more softly. "Aunt Thomas is very kind; you ought to be good to her all the same."

"Aunt Thomas?" he said, with a laugh, which was subdued, but still offensive to Amy's sensitive ear; and then he drew half a step nearer. "It is odd, is it not, that she should be aunt both to you and to me?"

"Yes, it is strange," said Amy, erecting her head. It was not only strange, it seemed intolerable looking at this man. "Let us go home," she said, suddenly. "Mamma will not allow Aunt Thomas to be troubled. Don't tremble; we are near home."

"I am going with you, if you will allow me," said Mr Tom Furness. "I have business with Mrs Scudamore too."

Mrs Thomas was leaning all her weight upon Amy, so that the girl could scarcely support her. At these words she let go her hold, and turning to her nephew with upraised hands, burst suddenly into tears.

"Oh, Tom, Tom, don't, please!

You think you are right, but surely it is I who must know best."

"You—know best! Why, Auntie, you don't know your own mind for two minutes together," he said, with an air of levity. "Come now, take it easy. We need not trouble Miss Scudamore with this business of ours."

"Oh, Tom!" cried the poor lady, "go away, for heaven's sake! It shall be none the worse for you—it will be better for you. I shall have it in my power to do something—at once. Oh, Tom! why will you torture me? I have never been cruel to you. I will meet you anywhere you please, and talk it all over; but, for pity's sake, go now! Don't come to Scudamore;—anywhere but here."

He did not look at her. He showed no signs of being affected by her appeal. He looked at Amy—at her wondering, wistful face, and the paleness that had come over it; and, with his eye on her, he answered, slowly, "Of all places in the world, it is to Scudamore I wish to come."

Mrs Thomas drew herself apart from her young companion. She stood before him, trembling, crying, wringing her hands. "Oh, Tom! if I ever was good to you in my life—if I ever showed you any kindness—oh, Tom!—Tom!"

He kept looking at Amy, not at her; and it was either because of some regret in his look, or because she was absorbed in the question which was evidently so important, but Amy felt no offence at his gaze. She did not much notice it, in fact. She watched with a keen sense that something momentous, something more than she could judge of, was involved.

"Aunt, it is of no use speaking," he said; "I am going with you; but perhaps, if you all please, it may be for good, and not for harm."

CHAPTER VI.

That day was a memorable one at Scudamore—memorable in more ways than one, and to more than one member of the household; for when Amy entered the drawing-room she found some one there who drove Mr Tom Furness and all the rest of the world out of her head for five wonderful moments. He was sitting by her mother, but with his eyes fixed on the door, and a glad gleam in them as she appeared. He had been travelling for more than a year, and before he went away Amy had been too young to be disturbed in her tranquillity by a love-tale—so at least Rex Bayard thought. He did not know that he had any place beyond that of an old friend in Amy's heart; but she knew, in some magical way, that she was queen of his, or at least possible queen. And here he was looking for her, making a special new world for her within the other. Everything else went out of Amy's head; she had to subdue her joy, her sweet consciousness, the flush of exquisite shy feeling that came over her, to look as if she was "very glad to see him again," and no more—to behave herself, in short, as a girl trained under her mother's eyes, in all the fine decorums of womanly self-restraint, ought to behave; lest he should see that her heart was beating, and the light in her eye dancing with this sudden, warm, unlooked-for flash of delight.

She had sat down, keeping her mother between them, with a girl's shy sweet artifice, taking refuge in Mrs Scudamore's shadow, and had been listening to his voice, asking him pleasant meaningless questions, for five minutes before she bethought herself—five minutes she supposed—but time went quickly just then with Amy. Mrs Scudamore, too,

was cheered and brightened by Rex's presence; she was looking almost like her former self; the cloud had lightened off her face. For a moment she had been overcast by the fear that Aunt Thomas was about to follow Amy into the room; but when no one appeared, Mrs Scudamore opened her heart to the pleasure of the moment. Poor heart! it had ached enough—this one moment it might surely take and rest. She talked as she had not talked for months. She seemed to have thrown off her burden—the shadow that hung over her. There were Rex's travels to discuss, and all he had been doing. Now he was to settle down at home, and that too had to be discussed. Mrs Scudamore thrust her own miseries away from her. The young man had grown up at her knee, as it were, yet not young enough to be a child to her, with something rather of that half-way stage between a son and a brother, which is so pleasant a relationship. He was a full-grown man, and so on her own level; and yet he was young, and was on her child's level. How Mrs Scudamore brightened up! She would not even allow herself to think of what might be coming; she took the pleasure of the moment—the only one she had allowed herself to take for so long.

"Oh!" said Amy, all at once, with a start of recollection. Her mother looked at her, and before a word had been said, felt that this good moment was at an end.

"What is it?" she asked, with the greyness of sudden pain falling in a moment over her animated face.

"Oh, mamma, I beg your pardon, I forgot! and I wish I could have forgotten still," said Amy, in a low, confused tone. "Mamma, there is some one in the library."

"I know," said Mrs Scudamore, with a voice of despair. She put her two hands together as if to hold herself up; or did she pray, sitting deadly still for one moment and no more, with her head a little lifted, her whole frame rigid? Then she drew a long heavy sigh, and then slowly, reluctantly rose from her chair. "I must leave you now—for a—few minutes," she said, and went out of the room as if she were going to her execution, with death already in her face.

"Is there anything wrong?" asked Bayard, amazed; "is Mrs Scudamore ill? what has happened? May I know?"

Upon which poor Amy, who had been obliged to restrain herself so long, and who was now for the first time, since she awakened to all those unexpected troubles, by the side of one whose sympathy was certain—poor Amy suddenly covered her face with her hands, and fell a-crying, overcome by the misery and the happiness together. One she could have borne, but the two together were more than she could bear.

"Oh, I cannot tell—I cannot tell," she said. "I think my heart will break; I don't know what it is, but it is killing mamma."

"Tell me what it is," said the young lover, drawing close to her. To make it easier he told her something else first—how he loved her, how he had thought of her wherever he went, how he had come back for her. It all came upon Amy like a sweet surprise, a delicious miracle; and yet she knew it was coming, but only some time—not now.

Thus there were two scenes going on within the agitated house, both of which penetrated down to the very depths of nature in the persons concerned. In the library Mrs Scudamore was alone with Furness. She had sent Mrs Thomas away, half in contempt, half in pity.

"Let me manage it my own way," she said; "there can be nothing gained by your remaining—nothing but pain to yourself;" and she had confronted the assailer all alone. She had brought against him every weapon that was in her power. She had set her face like a rock; she had refused to believe what she knew in the depths of her heart must be true. She had not yielded, would not yield, her pretensions for a moment. She was carrying out her formula to the last letter. At the risk of her life, to the peril of her soul, she would fight this last supreme battle out.

And then Mrs Scudamore was taken by surprise all at once by an unexpected proposal he made to her—a proposal to remove his opposition altogether—to become as fast a friend as he had been an enemy, and to consent to everything she could wish. He made this proposal when she was in her fullest strain of opposition, denying and resisting everything. It had the strangest effect upon her. She had been fighting the battle of despair, though she had kept so brave a front; and here was a way of escape. A sudden extraordinary pang of relief seized her. She had been on the strain so long, that escape seemed to her the greatest, the only good which life could give. Had the man meant falsely, he would have found out her weakness by this means. She sank into a chair, her nerves relaxed, a cry came from her heart; and though the next moment she braced herself to her old sternness, it was impossible to disguise that first movement of hope. Her eyes were dazzled and blinded by the prize held out to her—safety. It was not herself she was thinking of, heaven knows; for herself she felt it would be easy to go away and hide her stricken heart, and be heard of no more. But the children

—Charlie and his birthright—the girls and their honour—oh, what a temptation it was! She would have risked her soul to buy this deliverance, she had said. But the price asked for it was not her soul, nor her life—it was her child.

"I feel as if I could worship her," said Tom Furness. "Give her to me, and I'll make her happy. I never saw any one like her. It's a folly; for if I held out, I know we could have everything; but for her sake I'll give in. I'll consent to destroy the papers. I'll even take Auntie off your hands: I can manage that—so long as you'll give her to me; with her just fortune, of course."

Mrs Scudamore forgot herself in this wonderful sudden opening out of the darkness. "My child is the dearest thing I have in the world. I would give all I have rather than sacrifice Amy," she said.

"How do you know it would sacrifice Amy? She was awfully civil—as civil as she could be, the first time I was here—and I'd make her a good husband. I am as fond of her as any man could be. I'd rather have her without a penny, than any girl I ever saw with a great fortune. Though, mind, I must have her fortune, too, for her own sake. Now, that's my proposal. I'm acting like a fool, for I might have everything, and most likely her too; but it's my fancy, and I mean to please my eye if I should grieve my heart. Now, this is what I propose—if you accept, we're friends for ever: we'll make a bonfire of everything, and you're my mother-in-law, whom I'm bound to defend; but if not——"

He stopped short with a tone of irritation, for Mrs Scudamore had shuddered at the title. His mother-in-law! good heavens! but, on the other side, all the results surged up upon her, all the possibilities; there was not one of the family but would

suffer—Charlie most bitterly and terribly, in such a way that he would be ruined before he began life; and Amy herself would be miserably injured—it would be as good as a renunciation of all prospects for her; and even the little girls, the two innocent creatures in the nursery. It would be ruin, destruction, misery, to all. She sat silent, with this panorama passing before her—forgetting the man's very presence in the excitement of the offer he had made. What was it he asked?—a sacrifice—a sacrifice bitter and sad, but such a sacrifice as had been made before now. An Iphigenia, an Andromeda, perhaps not so bad—not so bad! and to save the rest. And Amy was the kind of girl to make a sacrifice; she could do it though it would rend her heart. Poor Mrs Scudamore had lived without love herself—it was a hideous life, and yet she had come through it, and had found a compensation in her children. She had done it without any grand motive; but Amy's motive would be the sublimest that ever woman had,—to save her family, their honour, their credit, their very life. She gave him no answer as he stood there before her, but she sat and pondered with a hot red flush upon her cheeks. Before she had half done thinking, he pressed her for an answer. How could she give an answer? How could she sacrifice her daughter? and oh, how could she, how could she give up this possible escape?

"Stay," she said, feebly, "stay over to-night; I cannot give you an answer all at once. If you will stay and—dine—with us—in the evening I will tell you. Oh, it is a hard price—a bitter price!"

"By Jove! you are complimentary," he said; "but I'll stay all the same. It is the only price I will take."

And, sighing, she went away from him, as sighing she had come. But

not so hopeless as when she had come—seeing one gleam of light through the darkness, seeing some hope. Amy had never been wooed as yet; how could any one tell what the girl's fancy might be? And the man loved her in his way. And—it was the only hope. Now that there was a hope, Mrs Scudamore seemed to become more and more sensible of the awful gulf on the brink of which she stood. It was not only ruin—it was more than that; more awful, more total destruction than anything which concerned worldly goods alone. She shuddered as she thought of it, now that it was possible to escape. She left the man with her head full of his proposal, and went back to the drawing-room. But Amy and her lover had strayed away out of the room, and therefore Mrs Scudamore's terrible hope was not brought to an end. She went and shut herself up in her own room, and brooded over it. That one should suffer to deliver many was a rule of the universe. The first and greatest who had ever borne the name of man had done it; and so many after Him had done it. To suffer vicariously for some one else that some one else might go free, why, it was nothing unusual; it was a law of the world; and Amy was the girl to do it. She would never hesitate to do it. She would accept it as natural and fit that she should suffer to save her family, as her mother felt she herself would have done had she been in her place. Amy would do it; and oh, was it possible, was there *peace* beyond this raging storm which enveloped her life? Would this hurricane pass over? and was it possible that again everything would be as it had been? But no; alas! never could these three months be obliterated; neither tears nor blood could wash out the mark; but it might be covered over, covered for ever, so that

no one should guess where it had been.

Mrs Scudamore remained in her room till dinner. She did not think again about Rex Bayard. No doubt, she thought—if she thought at all—that he had gone long ago. She had imagined once—was it a hundred years ago?—that her pretty Amy was very fair and sweet in the young man's eyes. But what were such levities as a boy's or a girl's fancy to her now? She did not even think of that in the agitation and excitement of this moment. Rex Bayard passed from her mind altogether; and when Amy ran up late to dress, and would have come to her mother with her confession, Mrs Scudamore sent her away hastily.

"You are very late," she said. "I will speak to you after dinner, Amy; there is no time now. It was thoughtless, very thoughtless to be so late. How could you tell what I might have to talk to you about? But make haste; there is no time to lose."

She did not observe Amy's brilliant cheek, nor her eyes dewy and abashed with happiness. Happiness! Mrs Scudamore had forgotten how it looked. Her heart was very sore, and throbbing with feverish pain. She was in haste now to go down again to see the man who had so much in his power, and who was willing to save her—to see him again, and to persuade herself that Amy might be brought to endure him, that the child would not be wretched: he was young, he was well-looking enough, and he adored her. Surely Amy would do it. She was such a child—so yielding, so facile, so dutiful. Surely she would do it; and the bargain would be made, and safety and honour bought and paid for. Amy had seen nobody—she would have no terrible comparison to make in her mind between him and others. She

had never been wooed before; and probably the strange new gift of love thus bestowed upon her might touch the child's heart, and she would be not, at least, very unhappy. Not unhappy — pleased, perhaps,

and flattered—her vanity, if not her heart, contented. Oh, if this only might be the case! For surely Amy would do it—of that there could be no doubt.

CHAPTER VII.

Mrs Scudamore was taken aback—she could scarcely have told why—by the appearance of Rex Bayard in the drawing-room when she came down to dinner. It is true he was an old friend, and sufficiently intimate in the house to stay to dinner without a very formal invitation; but still the sight of him annoyed her. She had come down late, as she generally did now, and the whole party were there, so that no immediate explanation could be offered.

"I asked him to stay, mamma," said Amy, timidly whispering in her ear.

"Oh, it is quite right," said Mrs Scudamore, coldly. She was not angry, but she was put out; for her own guest, the man she had asked to stay, was by this unexpected step put to such a disadvantage as his patroness in this terrible emergency would have done much to save him from. It does not always happen that high family and good blood stamp themselves upon either countenance or bearing of their possessors—indeed it is as common as not that the reverse is the case; and a stranger generally finds it hard to tell which is the peer and which is the plebeian. But there are cases in which the difference is as strongly marked as the highest idealism could require; and Rex Bayard was as near the typical representation of an English gentleman as it is easy to find. His ease and perfect good-breeding showed at once, as by an illumination, the awkwardness, the forced familiarity

which was not easy, the pretension and vulgarity of the other. They brought each other out, as a painter would say. Tom Furness had never been so much Tom Furness the attorney, Tom Furness the would-be swell, as Rex's appearance by his side made him; and Sir Reginald Bayard had never looked so perfect a *filz de croisé* as he did with Tom's shadow bringing him into full relief. This was all Mrs Scudamore thought of for the moment; but it was enough to add a shade of additional annoyance to the bitter conflict of misery in her heart. She avoided Rex, she could not tell why, with a feeling of irritation which was uncontrollable. His mere presence did it. Why was he here, making the contrast visible, tempting Amy to vain comparisons? Comparisons every way vain; for was not Tom Furness Amy's fate? Whom else could she marry? Mrs Scudamore felt that she could not, dared not, permit her child to enter a spotless, honourable family. She could marry no one except this man. To this point her thoughts had already come. She made Rex walk into dinner with Mrs Thomas, to his wonder and dismay, and took with a shudder the arm of the other.

"It's to be a bargain, I hope," her odious companion said to her, audibly, as they went from one room to another; and Rex looked back at her over his shoulder with the most curious, wondering, wistful look. He, too, wished to speak

to her. If it had but been any night but this!

He did manage to speak to her during dinner, which terrible meal seemed to the miserable woman as if it would never end. "May I see you for two minutes in the library before I leave?" Rex whispered. "Oh yes!" she said, dully. She did not even ask herself what he could want. For the rest, Mr Tom Furness filled up all the gaps during dinner with his mere presence. He was contemptuously jocular to his aunt, admiringly familiar to Amy, and, though she awed him, took an air of *bon camarade* with Mrs Scudamore, which humbled her more than anything she had yet encountered. "You and I know better," he would say, appealing to her; "we are up to all that sort of thing, you and I," with an insufferable nod of complaisance and assurance. How dreadful it was! The dinner seemed to last a year; and even when they left, there was Amy with a little important face looking at her, as if she too knew something. What could the child know? She could not have divined, surely could not suspect, the fate which was coming on herself.

"I hope you will not judge poor Tom hardly," said Mrs Thomas, when they had got to the drawing-room. It was rarely that she addressed of her own accord the mistress of the house; but to-night her womanish sense had perceived her nephew's inappropriateness in this place, and she could not refrain from an apology. "He has not been used to it, and he was a little excited—and anxious to please—and afraid——"

"He does very well," said Mrs Scudamore. "There is nothing to make excuses for. I think he did perfectly well."

"You are very kind, I am sure," said Mrs Thomas, retreating back into a corner almost out of sight.

Oh, how kind mamma is! thought Amy to herself. Though she looks a little stern at times, how good she is! for if there ever was a horrible, wretched, shocking—— And then the girl came and fluttered about her mother, watching to make sure that Aunt Thomas was out of the way, and scheming, with panting breath and beating heart, how she was to begin her tale. Her movements caught her mother's eye, and chafed her in her irritated condition. "Amy, pray sit down," she said, fretfully; "you worry one so with your restlessness." And thus poor Amy subsided too, not daring to speak.

"If you please, ma'am," said Woods, "Sir Reginald is waiting in the library," and he held the door solemnly open to admit Tom Furness, who appeared behind him. Amy sprang up and kissed her mother as she went out. She did not explain herself, and Mrs Scudamore asked no questions. But oh! to be left here with this man, while Rex was pleading his cause so near! Fortunately, however, Amy thought, with a smile in her eyes, Rex's cause would not want much pleading. Mamma was fond of him, too—mamma had known him all his life—mamma had been fond of his mother. To plead that cause would be no hard matter. But yet Amy could not but wonder what her mother would say. Would she be sorry to think that she was going to lose her child? Would she say they were both too young? Would she scold him for speaking to Amy first; or would she give him a motherly kiss, and send him to fetch her? The girl's mind was full of these thoughts when she was left alone with Mrs Thomas and her nephew, and her impatience and abstraction were evident. "My dear, I am afraid you are not well," said Aunt Thomas, putting down to her nephew's ac-

count the cloudy look which had come over the young face she was beginning to love. "Miss Amy is thinking of some one," said Mr Tom Furness, with an attempt at raillery, which he accomplished with even more awkwardness than his wont; for though he thought it gallant, and, indeed, his duty to be jocular and make innuendoes, he had too much awe of Amy to be at ease in the attempt. "Thanks; I am quite well," she said, growing red, with a hauteur which he had not yet seen in her. What she would have given to get rid of the two!—to rush away from them and await somewhere in the silence her mother's decision—or rather, as she herself put it, wait till her mother should send for her. But that was impossible. She had to remain, and to be civil to them, listening to every sound, and feeling every muffled movement or voice which was half audible in the distance going through her heart.

Mrs Scudamore went to the library to meet Rex without having once realised what it was he might have to say to her. She moved about in such a cloud of her own trouble—an atmosphere of secret, all-absorbing, personal care—that she had lost all insight into other people's feelings. She moved along dully, not roused even by the thought that it was a strange thing for Rex Bayard to seek an interview with her. Her imagination was too busy with her own affairs to have any leisure for speculation on such a subject. He came up to her eagerly when she entered the library, and took her hand in both of his. He looked into her face anxiously, trying to read its expression. "Dear Mrs Scudamore," he said, "you know what I want to say to you. I am sure you know."

"I don't know, indeed," she said, and then suddenly started like one

awakened. The words were true when she said them; but by the time he had received them they had become untrue. She gave a great start—her heart began to beat—she confronted him as she might have confronted her enemy; but she did not say another word. She left it to him to speak.

"Is it so?" he said, with surprise and a shade of regret. "How stupid I must be then! how little I must have made myself known! Mrs Scudamore, I want to ask you for Amy. I have loved her ever since she was a child. She is the only one I have ever dreamt of as my wife. You know all about me, as well as I do myself. There are no explanations to make, except that I love her dearly, dearly—and she says she loves me. I am so happy I can't talk about it. Why should you turn away? I will not carry her away to the end of the world. She will always be near you—here—next house, as it were. Mother, don't turn away from me. I want a mother, too, as well as a wife. Are you angry? Have I taken you by surprise?"

Mrs Scudamore kept her face turned away. She drew from his the hand he had taken, and with the other put him away from her. "No more—no more," she cried. "Yes; I am taken by surprise—I am—angry. No; I am not angry, Sir Reginald, for you do my daughter a great honour; but it cannot be—it can never be."

He stood amazed where she had left him, while she went to the table and sat down, turning from him, leaning her head on her hands. He stood there, in the centre of the room, petrified. "Sir Reginald! a great honour!" he cried to himself, with an amazement which no words could express; and for the first moment he thought she was mad; nothing else seemed possible to ex-

plain it. He thought that this must be the explanation of all that had troubled his Amy—her mother must be mad. God help her! it was a terrible calamity; but yet it was not despair, as this would be could he believe her to be in her senses. He hurried after her to where she had seated herself. He laid his hand softly upon her arm.

"Dear Mrs Scudamore——" he said.

She shook him off; she waved him away from her; she seemed as though she would have risen again and left him: and then suddenly turning round, she caught his hand in her own, and wrung it with a passionate painful clasp. "Rex," she cried, two hot tears dropping out of her eyes—"Rex, don't torture me; don't ask me any more. I would give her to you sooner than to any one in the world, but I cannot—I cannot. Don't ask me again, for the love of God. Go away, and think of Amy no more."

She was so profoundly agitated that he dared not answer her. He stood by her, softly touching her shoulder, trying to soothe her, half distracted, yet not without hope still. Something was the matter with her, with her brain or her health. She could not mean this in sober earnest. The very passion of her words showed that something excited her; and what was there to excite her in his most natural love for her child? So he stood by her, soothing her, waiting till she was calm. When Mrs Scudamore perceived this she made an effort to command herself.

"Dear Rex," she said, as calmly as she could, "you think I am excited, and that I do not mean this. You must think I am mad even to turn so from my friend's son—from you whom I have loved all your life; but I am not mad. Oh, would to God that I were!

Something has happened that makes your marriage with Amy impossible—impossible! You must understand that. It is not with my will I say it—it breaks my heart. But it must be said. Impossible either now or at any other time, whatever you may suffer, or even she—impossible. Rex, it is not with my will."

"But why?" he cried, still unbelieving. "This is mere madness—folly; in heaven's name, why?"

"I cannot tell you," she said.

And now it was his turn to be angry. He dropped her hand, which he had been holding. "You must tell me," he cried. "I will never agree to such a mysterious dismissal. I have a right to know what it is."

"And I say, if it should cost me my life, you shall never know."

She had risen to irritation again; it was easier to be angry than to yield to any other feeling. In the depths of her soul there lay a *severe* irritation with everything and all the world.

"I refuse to accept your decision," he cried. "What! I am to be made miserable, and my darling's heart broken, without a reason. You tell me calmly we are to be separated—and for ever——"

"Do I tell you calmly?" she said, with a miserable smile. "But there has been enough of this. Go away, if you have any respect left for me. Leave me, and leave the house, as soon as you can. There is nothing but misery here."

But he would not leave her; he stayed, and implored, and upbraided, and implored again, till her brain was burning and her heart breaking. When he went away at last, it was in a passion of rage and misery. He was so wild in his disappointment and pain, that though he had struggled with her for leave to see Amy again, he rushed away without ask-

ing for her at last, not trusting himself to seek an interview. Mrs Scudamore went back to the drawing-room alone. She had been a long time gone, and the miserable look in poor Amy's eyes, when she lifted them at her mother's entrance and saw that no one else was coming, went to the distracted woman's heart. The other terrible candidate for Amy's favour was standing in front of the girl, talking to her, trying to make himself agreeable, with a pertinacity which made Mrs Scudamore sick with anger, but which fell dull upon Amy's abstracted senses. She was wholly absorbed in the strain of listening for sounds outside the room; and though she made wide answers, yes and no, and tried to keep a smile upon her face, she scarcely heard what Tom Furness was saying. He was horrible to her from the fact that he was there, but not from any other cause. Aunt Thomas was looking on with very vivid attention, watching, seeing in some degree what it meant; but Aunt Thomas did not know how Mrs Scudamore had been occupied, and consequently was not aware of the worst complication of all.

"Amy, I am very tired. If Mrs Thomas will excuse me," said Mrs Scudamore, "I think I shall go to bed. Come with me; I have something to say to you, dear."

"Has Sir Reginald gone?" asked Aunt Thomas, beginning to perceive the possibility of further trouble.

"Yes, he has gone," said Mrs Scudamore, with a deep sigh.

Common sight seemed to be failing her. She saw the others dimly; but without looking at Amy, she saw the misery, the wonder, the despair in her eyes. She held out her hand, and they went out of the room together. They were both beyond the reach of ordinary civilities—too much agitated, too unhappy, to think of good-nights.

This was a want of decorum which their guest was very quick to note. He called out after them, "Good-night, ladies," half angry, half contemptuous. "They don't stand upon any ceremony," he said, when the door closed upon them—"they and their Sir Reginald." And he began to walk about the room, fuming. Mrs Thomas came up to him from her corner. The poor woman was keeping a very hard command over herself.

"Tom," she said, solemnly; "oh, Tom! you thought I was good to you once——"

"Bah!" said he.

"But it isn't bah! Your mother and all of them were very hard on me; they thought I had disgraced the family; and then when you found out this—— Tom, look into your own heart, and tell me. Since we began struggling for my rights, as you call them—have we ever been happy since?"

"Auntie, you're a fool. Who was talking of being happy?" he replied.

"I have not," she said, simply. "Do you think it's nice for me to be here, an interloper, poisoning the very air that poor woman breathes?"

"Then why the deuce do you do it?" cried the man. "It's your own fault. Turn them out and be done with it. You can if you like."

"And ruin the children!" she cried. "Tom, oh Tom, listen to me! Like this, we shall never have a blessing on anything we do. Let us take money and go away, and leave them at peace. She'll give money—enough to set you up; enough to make you comfortable. Oh Tom! if I ever was good to you in my life——"

"Aunt, you're a fool," he said again, sharply. "Go to bed. Leave them at peace—a likely thing! Take money! Oh yes, I'll take money, and more than money. She

knows what I will take. Auntie, hold your tongue, and go to bed."

That was the end of one appeal. Another was being made in Mrs Scudamore's room with the door locked, and Amy at her mother's knee listening to her fate. It was as fate that the sentence was pronounced. Rex was sent away never to return. It was impossible—impossible! Mrs Scudamore said. Neither now nor ever could he be allowed to come back. Amy had been kneeling anxious and unhappy by her mother's side. At this she sank down softly in her despair, which yet was more consternation than despair. And she too, with her white lips, with her eyes hollowed out, and shining as from two white caves, demanded why?

"I cannot tell you why," the mother cried. "Amy, listen to me. That has come to you which comes only to a few in this world. Oh, my darling, listen—listen! would God that it was me instead! but I can do nothing, only you can do it. Don't you think Mary would have died a thousand times, if she could, rather than her Son?"

"Oh, mother, what do you mean?"

"Amy, Amy," cried the miserable woman, with her lip at the child's ear, "you are one of those that must be a sacrifice—a whole sacrifice, what they called a burnt-offering. My best child, my dearest. Amy, I am going to kill you, and I love you best."

"Mother!"

She thought her mother had gone mad; nothing else could explain it. She thought she was about to be literally killed, there where she sat, at the feet of her natural protector. The last supreme passion of love and valour came into Amy's heart. She did not shrink a hair's-breadth, but

held up her white face ready to endure all things. She looked up like Isaac, without a thought of self-defence.

"You think I am mad," said Mrs Scudamore. "Oh, if I were but mad! Amy, there is only one that can do it. You can save us all from disgrace and ruin. You can save his living to Charlie, my honour to me, an honest name to yourself and the rest. Without you we are outcasts, nameless, houseless. Amy, nothing we have is ours, unless you will pay the price. Amy, everything rests on you."

"Nameless—houseless? our honour—all we have? Oh, what do you mean?—what do you mean?" cried Amy. "Mother, if I am to do this, I ought to know, at least."

"That is the worst," she cried. "You must do it, and you must not know. Oh, if I could die and spare you! but my dying would do no good. It is only you, only you. Amy, this is what I have to ask of you, my own. To sacrifice yourself for your family—to save us at the cost of yourself—without knowing why. Oh, my child, can you do it? will you do it, without knowing why?"

Amy was little more than a child. She had all a child's sublime confidence in her natural guides; she had not begun to think of any rights of her own; and she was full of that intense submission of innocence which makes a child's deathbed, a child's martyrdom, so rapturous and so wonderful. She said, with her white lips, "I have always obeyed you, mamma. I will do whatever you say now."

But she had to be carried to her room insensible, and laid on her bed like a marble figure, like one dead, when she heard what the nature of the sacrifice was.

CHAPTER VIII.

Things went on badly enough at Scudamore that autumn. Amy consented to the sacrifice, as her mother knew she would. And Mr Tom Furness became a constant guest. It was an arrangement over which Mrs Thomas shook her head, and against which she had protested, but in vain, to both the mother and the lover; but he and she were both steadfast. Mrs Scudamore was almost more feverishly anxious than he to conclude the matter. But Charlie had not yet come home, and the whole household regarded his arrival with a certain vague apprehension. He would soon be twenty-one. He knew nothing of the mystery which oppressed all the rest of the house, and the chances were that Mr Furness would be very far from gaining his approbation. Neither had Mrs Scudamore been able to screw her courage to the point of consulting the lawyer on the subject. She had asked Mr Pilgrim to come to Scudamore at Christmas, when Charlie would be at home, and then she had said to herself the struggle would be made once for all. She lived in a painful state of excitement, able to settle to nothing, trying to shut her eyes to the look of misery on Amy's white face, trying to be unconscious of her failing health and patient suffering. The girl had been crushed all at once by the sudden weight thrown upon her. She had yielded—what could she do else? but it had crushed her altogether. She had no training in suffering, no preparation to bear it, and she succumbed. She felt sure she was going to die—a certain solemnity of feeling came over her. She thought of herself as on the brink of the grave. What did it matter for a few weeks or a few months whether she was happy or

miserable. She would be happy in heaven when the end came, and would have done her duty, and that end could not be far off.

Perhaps Amy was not entirely miserable in these thoughts. To die young, when your life has been but short, as hers had been, is not terrible. It is rather sweet to the imagination. She thought of it, and of the grave covered with violets, which would soon be hers, with a youthful exaltation of feeling, which was as much joy as grief. And she would have saved her family. She would be as Iphigenia, nay, almost as Christ himself. She would die, thus getting rid of all misery, and they would be saved. She wrote tender, sweet, religious letters to all her friends, telling them that "it was borne in upon her" that she was to die young. She wrote one heart-rending letter to poor Rex. She was kind to Tom Furness even, and very gentle, though she shrank from him; and she had made up her mind how she was to meet Charlie, how she was to say it was her own choice, how she was to refuse all relief from her engagement. It was all settled. The only thing that grieved her in her resigned, and, as it were, dying state, was that her mother avoided her, and could not bear to behold the sacrifice she had exacted. This was a little hard on poor Amy, but she accepted it like the rest. She made pictures to herself of her mother stealing out to weep over her grave, of how they would miss her in the house, of how they would say Amy liked this and that, and hold trifles sacred for her sake. All this was a pleasure to her, though it is so strange to say so; and on account of the gentle early death which was coming, she felt it possible to put up with her fate.

Charlie for his part had been absorbed in his college life, and had thought but little of home. He had received one indignant, enraged letter from Rex Bayard, which half amused, half annoyed him. In it Rex informed him that he had been accepted by Amy, but sent away by her mother. "You must be dreaming, or she must be out of her mind," Charlie had written back cheerfully in return; "but never mind, old fellow, have patience only till I get home again." He had no doubt whatever of being able to set everything right when he got home. Evidently things were at sixes and sevens there for want of him—so the young man thought; but when he got back—— And then Charlie forgot all about home, and made himself quite happy with his friends.

These three months were very dreary to all in the house. Furness went and came continually, and when he thought that Amy repelled him ever so little, he went and threatened her mother, and declared it would all come to nothing, and that she never meant her daughter to marry him. The whole house began to fear those visits. The servants complained, and Jasper gave warning. Even Woods would have done so, but that he was, he said, attached to the family, and meant to see this business out. Mrs Thomas wept and shook her head from the time Tom Furness entered the house till he left it. The children avoided him, for he teased them. And poor Amy tried to be kind to him. She was the only one at Scudamore who did not hate him. She tried to be kind, and would not allow herself to hate.

All this went on till Christmas; but it is impossible to tell with what sinking yet swelling hearts the women of the house looked forward to the arrivals which they expected. Charlie came one day

and Mr Pilgrim came the next. Mr Tom Furness was there, to Charlie's immense astonishment. He sought his mother out the very first evening and remonstrated, "Why do you bring that fellow here? Aunt Thomas is very well, but I don't see that we are bound to be complaisant to her friends——"

"Don't let us speak of him now—to-morrow," Mrs Scudamore had said. "To-morrow I have something to tell you about him; but for heaven's sake be civil to-night!"

"If I do it will be a hard struggle, I can tell you," said Charlie; but yet he did restrain himself as well as he knew how, though the fellow's familiarity, his evident acquaintance with the house, and especially his tone to Amy, made her brother furious. And Amy looked like a ghost and kept out of his way. He was very uncomfortable, for he could not make it out. "Scudamore don't look a bit like itself—everything seems at sixes and sevens," he said to Aunt Thomas. She was the only one who was not changed, and the chief comfort he had.

Next day Mrs Scudamore called her son and the newly-arrived lawyer to the library, and told them her intentions about her daughter. If she had thrown a bombshell between them they could not have been more surprised. There was a terrible scene, Charlie and his mother defying each other mutually. "I will not allow it," he said. "And I have settled it all," she answered, with an appearance of calm. The lawyer tried to remonstrate, but it was in vain; and Amy was sent for, and with a face like death solemnly answered that it was of her own will that she was going to marry Mr Furness. "It is my own choice," she said,

crossing her hands on her breast. The men gazed at her with mingled awe and doubt. Her aspect was that of a martyr, but she smiled as she spoke. She would not give any one an excuse for interfering; no tear came to her eye, no quiver to her voice. "I shall die soon, and what will it matter?" she was saying to herself.

After this scene it may be supposed that life was not more pleasant at Scudamore. Charlie and his mother did not exchange a word for two or three days; and Furness obtruded his hateful presence upon her, asking for continual interviews, pressing for the marriage. Mrs Scudamore herself had been anxious to hasten it till now—but now she took fright, or was seized with sudden reluctance. Her child was so young; she was ailing and wanted care; and summer surely was soon enough. She resisted the last decision with feverish force. She would not fix the day. Amy, when appealed to, grew paler still, but said, "When they pleased;" and her mother struggled alone for delay. She had not an easy antagonist to meet; he had grown careless in his power over her—he began to address her roughly even in the presence of others, to warn her that she had better not provoke him, that the consequences might be such as she would not care to face. Her life became a burden to her in those dreadful days. She dared not order him to leave her house, as it was often on her lips to do. She dared not appeal to Charlie, or even permit him to suspect that this man whom she had chosen for her son-in-law was already her tyrant. She even, heaven help her, kept up the quarrel with her son that he might not find out the persecution to which she was exposed.

But one day this state of affairs came to an end. There had been a

stormy discussion in the morning, and Mrs Scudamore, driven to her last resources, had promised a final answer in the afternoon. She was in the library once more, and her persecutor came in and joined her through the window which was open. It was one of those mild, warm, languid days which sometimes occur in the middle of winter, which people call unseasonable yet enjoy. There was an enormous fire as usual in the library, and the window had been opened in consequence. Tom Furness came in by it with his hands in his pockets and his hat on his head. If he condescended to remove the latter it was more for his own comfort than out of any respect to her. He began to speak almost before he got into the room,—“Now, look here,” he said, “old lady—I hope you’ve made up your mind. I am not going to be kept hanging on like this, month after month. I’ve told you so. By Jove! I believe you want to leave me in the lurch after all.”

“You have my word,” said Mrs Scudamore, haughtily.

“Your word; oh, and a great deal of good that will do me! I want Amy’s word,—do you understand? I want no more vague general promises. If your part of the bargain is not to be kept, neither shall mine. Would you like to hear once more, just to leave no manner of doubt on the subject, what I can do——”

“You will drive me mad,” said Mrs Scudamore. “How dare you stand and threaten me thus at the open window; how can you tell who may hear you? and do you know, if you are overheard—if this slander is once spoken in anybody’s ears but mine, that you lose all your power?”

He turned his back to the window with a careless laugh. “Not

much fear of any one hearing," he said. "We are not such agreeable society that people should follow us about to listen. But just look here. You know what will happen if I choose to speak. You know you have no more right to be mistress here than your housekeeper has; you know you are not fit company for decent folks, and your children aint Scudamores any more than I am. You may thank an honest man for taking a girl without a name into his house. You know as well as I——"

He had gone so far as this without looking at her. Now, quite suddenly, she caught his eye, and made him start. She was standing with her lips apart, the breath, as it were, frozen between them, as if she had tried to cry out and could not—her eyes dilated, fixed on something behind him, and deep lines of anguish about her mouth. Her hands were half uplifted in wonder, or appealing to some one, he could not tell which. In that attitude of agony, with pain written deep all over her, she stood as if petrified, unable to move—a figure of ice or stone.

He was frightened by her aspect, though he did not understand it; and, at the same time, he became aware that something had darkened the air behind him; he turned round hastily to see what it meant.

This was what it meant. He had but begun to speak when Mrs Scudamore, lifting up her eyes, saw a shadow behind him. Then, dumb with horror, she had seen Charlie suddenly appear at the window. He stood still, and she in her misery could not move, she could not cry out. She stood and gazed wildly at him, paralysed with boundless and hopeless despair.

"You have been listening, have you?" said Tom Furness, with a sharp laugh. "Well, you have been

wondering what attraction I had. Now you know."

He had no time to say another word. Before he knew he was so much as threatened, he flew out of the window doubled together like a piece of goods.

"There's for insulting my mother," the young fellow shouted at the top of his voice; "and there's for Amy, and there's for myself. Did you think you could frighten me?"

"Oh, Charlie!" Mrs Scudamore cried, wildly. But Charlie paid no heed. He took up Furness's hat and tossed it after him. He closed the window loudly with a certain violence. He was trembling with excitement and the thrill of this discovery, and he had not spoken to his mother for three days before.

"Now tell me what it is," he said, peremptorily. "This fellow has bullied and frightened you. I suppose there must be something to build upon. What is it? You must tell me now."

Mrs Scudamore wavered for a moment. How could she tell him? She had been almost glad in her terror to see her persecutor flying thus out of her sight. She had been proud of her boy and his young vehemence and indignation; but now once more she was struck dumb; a great blinding horror came over her. Tell him her own shame and his! She could not do it. It would be better even, she felt, that he should hear it from Furness—from any one rather than herself.

"I cannot—I cannot!" she cried, covering her face with her hands. Was it indeed all over now? or could she make one effort still—one mad attempt to regain the friendship of her persecutor? "You don't know what you have done," she cried, wildly; "he is the best friend we have. Let me speak to him, Charlie. Say you are sorry, for the love of God!"

"I think it must be for the love of the devil," he said, sadly, "who only could make divisions among us like this. Mother, can you trust me so little? With my will you shall never speak to that miserable rascal again. Tell me, your son."

"I cannot—I cannot!" she cried, raising a ghastly face to his, in which supplication and despair were blended. Charlie was half crazed with the obstinate mystery that wrapped her round. He did not stop to think; he rushed out of the room to solve it in his own way. Even this was a relief to his mother. She sat supporting her deathlike face in her hands, with her eyes fixed on the door by which he had disappeared. It was over: he would know all; but at least not from her. There was a pause in which the whole world seemed to stand still. She did not breathe. Silence, awful as fate, was in her miserable heart, and in the house which was hers no longer, which she must leave in ruin and shame.

But she kept her senses when the door opened, though the figures which came in were as ghosts to her. Even then, in her stupor, it gave her a pang to see her boy leading that woman—that woman, through whom, she said to herself, it had all come. Mrs Thomas was crying, as usual—crying! She wondered vaguely how any one could weep at such a moment;—a child does it for some trifle; but now—

"I will say nothing till she gives me leave," said Mrs Thomas, among her sobs. "If I was wronged once, it is she who is wronged now. Oh, she's bitterly wronged—cruelly wronged! If my dying could have saved her, I think I could have killed myself; but it wouldn't, for Tom Furness knew. Oh, you poor soul! you are nearly dead of it.

Give me leave to speak before it kills you!"

Other people had come into the room—other faces, it seemed, in a cloud; and Amy, who stole behind Mrs Scudamore's chair, and put her arms round her, supporting her—Amy, who was dying of it too, but without knowing what it was. Mrs Scudamore turned her white face towards the group, which she saw but vaguely through the mist that was gathering on her brain. Her lips moved, but no sound came from them. She looked like Death embodied, but she resisted still. The excitement of the moment, however, had risen above all restraint; and either Mrs Thomas took those unspoken words for a permission, or she was swept out of herself by the emotion surrounding her.

"This is what it is," she said; "and I wish I had been dead—I wish my tongue had been torn out before I told it. Oh, children, curse me, or kill me, if you will. I was your father's lawful wife years before ever he saw her face."

"My father's wife!" It was Charlie who spoke, with white lips. He turned and looked round him with a gaze of bewildered despair. He did not know what he had fancied; but it was not anything like this. Then his eye fell on his mother, whose face was fixed on his; not her eyes only, for these were hollow, and strained, and almost sightless. He threw from him the hand of the other woman, which he had been mechanically holding, and rushed to her who had the best right to his support. She was sitting bolt upright, in an attitude which it was terrible to see. He went behind her, in vague terror, and drew her back to lean upon him. The other Mrs Scudamore, the legal possessor of everything,

the woman whose presence filled this house with shame, threw herself on her knees at her rival's feet, looking up at her with clasped hands, with tears streaming down her cheeks——

It was at this moment that Mr Tom Furness, having picked himself up, swaggered in, meaning to have his revenge of all who had injured him. "Oh, here you all are!" he exclaimed; and then stopped short, struck dumb by the sight he saw.

At the sound of his voice everybody started. It introduced a new element, and for the moment distracted their thoughts from the chief sufferer. Amy clasped her mother closer, and burst into a flood of blessed tears.

For she was free. The catastrophe was terrible, incomprehensible; but she was free. Whatever the fact might be, it could not be worse—it could not be so hideous as the price she had been about to pay. She kissed her mother's cap and her dress, in this sweet change of sorrow, with a passion of relief and enthusiasm. "Oh, mother dear, we will help you to bear it," she said. "Whatever it is, we will bear it together. Whatever it is, it cannot be so bad, mother darling!" Then Amy stopped, and uttered a sharp and terrible cry: "Mother, oh mother! Charlie, look!"

She sat there leaning back upon her son, with her daughter's arms around her, with the woman at her feet who had brought her to shame. Her face of marble looked out from the group, confronting the assailants of her honour. Dumbly she faced them still though she saw them not, shielding her children. Even Tom Furness gave a cry of horror. The look of those great sightless eyes of anguish never went out of his soul. She was dead.

She had fought her battle to the end, and redeemed her pledge—at the risk of her life—to the peril of her soul.

The sway she had over them had been so great that, up to the moment when Amy made that terrible discovery, all the others who were gazing at her had been too much absorbed with the thought of what she was about to do or say, to find out what had happened. Now they all saw it at the same moment. At the climax of her long suffering, still facing her enemies, having no refuge open to her, she had died—in harness as it were, with her arms in her hands.

It would be vain to dwell longer upon such a scene. The young people left Scudamore that night, carrying their dead with them, and went to a little house not far off which had belonged to her in her maiden right—a little lonely half-ruinous place, but not too dreary for them in their sorrow. There they buried her, half the county coming in wrath, and grief, and indignation beyond words, to the funeral. And then they began the strangest desolate new life.

But this life was not long desolate; and with all their efforts they could not, after the first pangs were over, make it as miserable as they felt it ought to have been. For the news brought Rex Bayard home from Italy, where he had been trying to learn patience, with lightning or at least with express speed. And by the time the violets began to bloom over her mother's grave, Amy, in sorrow but in gladness, married him, all her friends persuading her to a step so wise and so happy, and her little sisters thus found another home. "As for me it does not matter," Charlie said; for the blow had fallen upon him with tremendous force. He wanted to go away

to the end of the world, anywhere, only to forget and to be forgotten. His heart, he thought, was broken; his head he could never hold up again. So he believed; but he had the remnants of his mother's property to collect and look after. And he was but twenty-one; and Rex Bayard stood by him like a true brother—so that by degrees he reconciled himself to the bitterness of his fate. Poor Mrs Scudamore, now legally acknowledged and abandoned by everybody in her undesired grandeur, made overtures to the young people which I am sorry to say they did not respond to. But at her death she too had justice done to her, even by those whom she had so unwillingly injured. She left Scudamore Park and all the property over which she had any power to Charlie. Tom Furness brought a lawsuit against him, propounded another will, and spent a great deal of money in furious and ineffectual litigation. But all in

vain. His aunt had escaped from him at the last moment into better hands. She left a letter for Charlie, imploring him not to refuse his just inheritance, and telling him that she was convinced his father, having abandoned her for so long, had no doubt that she was dead. This was a kind of balm to the wounds of the family, though it was one which implied a villany almost as great as that which had killed their mother. But the injury intended to be done to the submissive creature whom they had known as Aunt Thomas, did not affect them like the other. So that in ten years the great sea of human life had closed over this tragedy, as the other sea which is less terrible closes over a wrecked ship; and Charles Scudamore reigned peacefully in the home which had been nearly lost to him, and sat in his father's seat. Thus Time made it up to the survivors, but not till the first victim—the offering for sin—had been slain.

THE NINE-HOURS MOVEMENT.

THE movement for reducing the length of the ordinary day's work to nine hours has already made great progress, and seems likely to make more. It promises to realise a success which has seldom been accomplished by the agitation of the working classes. This fact alone, supposing the spread of this requirement and its concession by the employers of labour to continue, indicates that there is some reality in the claim, some correspondence in it with the condition of the commercial world. If carried out to the extent conceived by its promoters, the establishment of such a custom would amount to a very practical revolution. It may be a very beneficent revolution; some revolutions have conferred great services on humanity, and this one may deserve to be grouped amongst this small but very important class of events. Beyond doubt, that men should work nine hours only instead of ten, would be an occurrence of infinite significance. Its results must be enormous. It would derange many old things and set up many new ones. It might bring incalculable benefits on the whole nation; or, if built on an unsound foundation, it might produce extreme mischief, which it might take generations to efface. On every account, therefore, this movement in the practical world merits the closest study. It interests deeply every man in the country that the tendency and ultimate effects of this great measure should be forecast with all possible accuracy. The men whom it will affect directly are counted by millions; the property which it will draw under its action will be reckoned by many millions more. It is scarcely pos-

sible to name a subject which ought to receive more searching examination from every man who loves his country and his fellow-beings.

In order to be able to judge the claim for reduced time of labour put forth by the workmen, as well as the chances and effects of such a change, when accomplished, it is absolutely necessary to have a thorough understanding of the conditions under which wealth is produced, and the main principles which govern its division amongst all who are concerned in this universal operation. This is a region abounding in ignorance and prejudice. Unfortunately it is one also in which, on the one side, vague notions of philanthropy and imaginative ideas of what humanity is supposed to prescribe, and still more, is equally supposed to be capable of making good, have got hold of men's minds: and on the other, the dexterous cunning of men bent only on turning the passions and errors of others to their own ambition and aggrandisement, have diverted the minds of the working classes from a calm investigation of the true and inevitable laws of nature. We must begin from the beginning, or a real understanding of this all-important matter will never be reached. How, then, is wealth produced? How are all those things made which supply the necessary wants, and gratify the desires for enjoyment of mankind? Obviously nothing can be made without a maker; a labourer is indispensable for providing for every want of men. Further, a labourer must be clothed and fed whilst he is at work; he must have shelter for himself and his family; he must be furnished with tools, for nature

makes no direct provision for his wants, as she does for the other animals. Finally, he must have materials on which to labour, matter to transform from a useless into a useful state, primary substances wherewith to construct the things called wealth. All these things must pre-exist before the labourer can begin to work, and they are collectively called capital.

It will be perceived at once that without capital there can be no production of wealth, no food, no clothing, nor any of the necessities or the comforts of life. Equally clear becomes the ignorance of those who denounce capital; and they are many and even educated persons who ought to know better, and speak in a wild incoherent way about a new world to come, in which capital would have disappeared. In this world, at any rate, men cannot live, because they cannot work, without capital; and the only question can be, who shall accumulate and own the capital? The owner of the capital may also be the labourer, and to some extent this fact presents itself in economical life: but experience shows that the mass of labourers never have possessed the capital which must precede their labour. It is proposed that the State shall come to their aid, and through its agency all things will then be possessed in common. In theory this communism is perfectly conceivable; but in practice it is involved in difficulties which have always prevented it from being carried out. Socialism and communism have never yet been able to contrive a method by which the distribution of the common wealth might be effected. The State is a bad commercial master: it is inferior in energy to the vigour of private industry which reaps the benefit of the labour expended; and, above all, the State would be at its wits' end to persuade men of unequal

talents, unequal bodily and mental capacities, to toil for a common ownership in which all should share alike. We need not therefore speak at any length here of communism as a practical system: and we may fall back on life as it exists throughout the whole human race, in which employers in one form or other provide capital, and the workmen supply labour.

It must be observed, in the first place, that both parties alike are interested in the produce, the wealth made being as large as possible with the smallest attainable labour. Labour is not a desirable thing in itself; and manifestly the labourer, quite as strongly as the employer, must desire that there should be plenty to divide, and that it should have been acquired with the minimum of toil to himself. In other words, it is supremely important for both parties that labour should be as productive as possible. The employer will then obtain more; and the labourer will also have a larger share, or the alternative of labouring less for the same reward.

Secondly, the labourer ought to understand clearly that labour cannot be productive, cannot create a large stock to divide, unless it is furnished with a large supply of tools, food, and clothing, and raw materials; that is, capital is absolutely essential to the productiveness of labour, and the workman can have no interest, quite the contrary, in diminishing the stock of capital. What injures capital injures him; and he must carefully bear in mind that amongst tools none are so efficient as steam-engines, great machinery, well-drained and well-tilled land, and the like. If the engines and machines of England were to disappear, millions of her people would perish of starvation.

Thirdly, the position of the labourer brings him under the uni-

versal law of supply and demand. The labourer has no capital, no means of supporting himself whilst labouring to produce the wealth he needs. The peasant would starve long before the harvest was gathered, were he not sustained by wages from the farmer. If the farmer refused to employ him, a poor-law or charity would be his only salvation. Now it is obvious that the initiative of employing the labourer necessarily belongs to the man who owns the means, without which they cannot labour: he determines the work which shall be made, and then procures workmen to make it. In engaging the labourers, he cannot, as a general principle, do otherwise than purchase their labour at the smallest cost. That does not at all mean that his interest lies in piling down the wages to the lowest minimum; for such a practice will speedily visit him with inefficient labour, deficiency of energy, and a low moral, which must always be also a low economical, standard amongst his people. Still he will not exceed the market rate of labour; he will engage men at the prevailing wages: he is a purchaser of working power, and the sale of that power is as much governed in its market by supply and demand as is the horsepower of steam-engines. It cannot be otherwise: for the opposite condition that, irrespectively of the supply of the number of men seeking employment, they can impose their rate of remuneration on the employer, is inconsistent with that which is the basis of all commercial life, the voluntary action of all parties. The demand is plainly the search of the employer for workmen, his power of paying them; the supply—and here is the vital matter—is the number of men seeking to be employed, is the means of sustaining their existence. The sale of all articles invariably is affected by the quantity

offered for purchase. Makers and sellers are profoundly aware of this fact, and act upon it: they rear animals and manufacture goods in proportion to the demand, to the certainty of sale, and the price which will be obtained. But here we come upon a law which at times presses heavily on the human race, as it does upon all animals. Every living thing has the power of multiplying its numbers beyond the power of nature to provide them with food and shelter; and man forms no exception to this rule. Nature enforces her limit on birds and beasts by destroying the excess. In the case of man, he rears domestic animals only in proportion to his wants; but who is it and what is it which keeps the numbers of mankind on a level with their food and clothing? The same fearful process which nature adopts towards other animals, unless the intelligence of man himself enables him to avert it. There is no escape from the law: premature death, chiefly in the stage of childhood, attests the fatal deficiency of food and shelter. Humanity shrinks from recognising a force so fearful. It often prefers to preach, as educated clergymen were wont to proclaim, that God would feed the beings who were brought into the world; but fevers and famine take no heed of such preachings. The dominant truth, that prudence is the only weapon which nature has provided against such disasters, is now generally coming into the foreground; still its appreciation is far from being yet what it ought to be. The working classes still fail to apprehend the full force of the mighty alternative imposed on them by nature—numbers proportionate to the means of subsistence, or destruction in one form or other. They prefer to cast the blame on the hard-heartedness of the rich, or the cruelty of political economists. But the delusion will not avail

them. The economists only point to an inexorable fact which is not of their own making; and but a very little reflection is needed to perceive that, if the rich were devoured by the poor, the law would reassert itself with more formidable power than ever. When capital had been swallowed up, and the stimulus to population afforded by the temporary affluence which confiscation provided had done its work, the problem would be more insoluble than ever, and the destruction of the impoverished people more absolutely certain and overwhelming. The rich may fail, beyond doubt, in discharging those many duties which human life imposes on the conduct of men towards each other; they may take an unfair advantage of their position; they may leave uncorrected evils embodied in the structure of society. All this may be most true, still it would not alter the essence of the position assigned to all animals by nature. Even were communism founded as the actual relation of all men towards each other—if there were no rich, and, we will suppose, no poor—we cannot conceive how communism could avoid enacting some restriction on the swelling numbers of population; how it could help placing some limit on marriage, and the children to be brought into the world. If every man and woman felt assured that they and their families must come in for an equal share of all the wealth produced, what possible field would there be left for thoughtfulness in the contracting of marriage? The infanticide practised by some ancient and modern nations would not be far off.

The regulation of the supply of labour, the maintaining of a due proportion between the numbers of the population and the quantity of necessities available for their sub-

sistence, is the everlasting problem which every form of society, in every age, is called upon to encounter. On the proper preservation of this ratio, its wellbeing, its happiness, essentially depends. Communism, as we have remarked, would be forced to settle this ratio by direct law. The universal system of private property leaves the solution to the general working of the manner of life adopted by each nation. Men are thus left to find out for themselves, by actual trial and the experience of daily life, the amount of the population which the resources of a country will bear; the pinch of distress furnishes ultimately the necessary adjustment. By such a process the ultimate decision is thrown on the action of each individual man. If he is in excess, he suffers for it; and either he must have no children, or his children must bear the penalty in a still heavier degree. The prudence, therefore, of each man, is the final resource on which human nature has to rely for the regulation of the numbers of the people. Whatever quickens that prudence educates it, teaches it to observe, invigorates it to act, strengthens the basis on which the public happiness rests: whatever weakens that prudence converts it into apathy and recklessness, deadens its vitality and obscures its vision, is the founder and creator of calamity in the present and in the future.

Providence has come to the help of man in this greatest of earthly problems. Resources of indefinite extent have been stored up for the sustenance of populations vastly exceeding any yet reached in actual life. Man has not yet reached, nor will he, presumably, for many ages yet to come, reach a position which renders the supply of necessities fixed and incapable of increase. The solution of the problem of the adaptation of numbers

to subsistence is vastly facilitated by the expansion given to the resources of mankind by the growth of their intelligence, and still more by the wonderful command over the powers of nature which mechanical invention has generated. It is a very different matter how to provide that each family shall be represented in the next generation by the same number of individuals, or to accommodate increasing numbers to increasing resources. Economists can take a hopeful view of the latter task, and may plead this cheerfulness against the accusations of inhumanity which have been so freely launched against their readings of the decrees of nature. This great fact of the expansiveness of industry, its capability to develop ever-swelling wealth, its power to add to the resources of the human race, is the foundation of the prosperity of the modern world.

Fourthly, we remark that this ever-present problem of the adaptation of population to subsistence presented greater facilities for solution to the great agricultural population of the past, than to the more complicated forms of modern society. In such stationary communities as were once widely spread over Europe, and still succeed each other in unchanged duration in the vast regions of the East, the elements of the problem lay before the eyes of all. The whole village knew the number of its fields, and their average produce. Most of the wants of daily life were supplied within its narrow circle. The sheep furnished the wool, and the villagers, especially the women, converted it into clothing. Population under such circumstances could scarcely run into serious excess. Undue numbers quickly encountered the penalty of misery, and not seldom of starvation. New dwellings were difficult to procure, and thus the in-

evitable line between a satisfactory and an unendurable life was clearly perceptible to all, and was guarded with practical, if not scientific vigilance, by the whole community. It is far otherwise with modern life. Endless division of labour has reared up the most entangled relations on every side. The village community has ceased to provide for all its desires. Its clothing, its furniture, its pins and needles, are constructed in localities far distant from its boundaries; nay, much of the food which supports its existence is produced in lands separated perhaps from it by half of the circumference of the earth. It consumes innumerable articles which are acquired from foreign countries. One nation manufactures food, another clothing, a third comforts which cheer and console labour. Even the distant East has learnt to rely on remote England for the yarns which supply its countless looms. This complex machinery of industrial life has, however, created difficulties peculiarly its own. It is no longer possible for the simple villager to estimate the probabilities of the future supply of subsistence. The size of the village fields, and the familiar yield of its harvests, no longer tell him anything about the reward which labour may reasonably expect to reap. The demand which furnishes the weekly wages he receives comes from unknown regions; he cannot calculate either its future force or its duration. The uncertainty of such a situation reaches its climax in England. By virtue of her coal and minerals, her vast industrial machinery accumulated through many years of insular security, the skill of her people, and the resources of every kind stored up in her factories, England has become the workshop of the whole world. A great part of her population thus directly depends for existence on

what it receives from foreign countries, and the orders they may send for her wares ; and this division of labour, prolific as it is of enormous wealth all round in the long-run, is nevertheless, as it were, an atmosphere charged with thunder-clouds of uncertainty. Those that make and sell for all the world are necessarily involved in the fortunes of the whole world. Universal prosperity, peace and plenty amongst the nations, bountiful harvests, and expanding industries, bring heavy demands for English goods, swell wages and profits alike, fill the minds of the working classes with confidence and hope, and wonderfully lengthen the lists of marriages in every county. Unfruitful harvests and diseased silk-worms, famines in India and civil war in America, protective legislation and slackening trade, new fashions and new tastes, spread poverty in Lancashire, and raise the price of food everywhere, reduce exports, because there are no imports to be sent to balance them, close mills and stop wages, scatter distress amongst the seafaring classes of eastern London, and, as if by the magical wand of some evil spirit, convert a busy and thriving into a hungry and ill-clad population. How shall the working classes, under the pressure of such fitful breezes of eager demand or feeble calls for their labour, calculate the chances of the future, or learn rules which may guide them in conforming the supply of hands to the power there may be of remunerating them ?

This gigantic evil of uncertainty is the heaviest weight with which British industry is loaded, and there is no complete and effectual remedy for the mischief which it creates. It is beyond comparison the chief cause of strikes, and of the loss and suffering they entail. If masters and men could but discover rules which

regulate demand for labour, the adjustment of their respective claims would become a matter of easy accomplishment. Moreover, this uncertainty presses most heavily on the workmen. It is bad enough for employers ; still, their habits and education enable them to make some forecast of coming events. But the workman is destitute of the elements of this calculation. He is ignorant, uneducated, unacquainted with foreign countries, and their social and commercial position. He is compelled to take for his guide the demand for labour in his own region ; the vicissitudes which fall upon distant lands cannot enter as a practical item into his estimate of his position. He deals with his employer only ; he knows that it is he who offers him his wage, who offers to raise or to reduce it, and what facts has he to build upon, when he is summoned to accept the offer ? How shall he learn whether the master acts fairly in the actual state of the labour market ? He is ignorant of the condition of the trade, an ignorance which breeds suspicion. He is perpetually tempted to reject a rate of wages which knowledge, could it be obtained, would at once prompt him to accept.

Fifthly, the baneful influence of this uncertainty is immensely aggravated by the most distinguishing characteristic of modern industry, the aggregation of huge masses of people in a narrow locality. Manchester and Birmingham make yarns and iron goods for a great part of the human race. The numbers of their people correspond with this great fact. Hence the employers, under such circumstances, are extremely few compared with the workmen ; and their juxtaposition groups these latter into a dense and homogeneous class. Over and against the employers this class becomes a nation, animated with a genuine national feeling,

developing the antithesis, if not the antagonism, incident to all nationalities, and, which is of great importance here, peculiarly susceptible of generating a strong sympathetic feeling through the whole homogeneous mass. This antagonism has proceeded so far as to impel Mr F. Harrison to declare that the artisans of England were workmen first and then Englishmen. The distinction of countries becomes secondary to the sentiment of class. It is obvious how powerful must be the action of suspicion and uncertainty on so jealous and so homogeneous a body. Greatness of numbers inspires a consciousness of strength; and when the issue to be tried is whether the wage offered by the employers does justice to the true position of the workmen, the construction of a strike easily occurs to the mind, and is quickly carried out into practice. This situation of the working classes constitutes the grand characteristic, one might almost say the crisis, of these latter days.

But, sixthly, Is the distinction between master and man one of radical, incurable enmity? No supposition can be more false. Political economy does not countenance such an idea for an instant. The disagreeable fluctuation in the demand for English goods brings loss and perplexity to both sides. It generates questions hard to solve at the time. It gives rise to contests, founded, not on genuine hostility of interests, but on a distribution of the rewards of industry, for which no satisfactory data exist. But it cannot be doubted that the interests of the two classes coincide: they are partners, not rivals, in the same enterprise. It is no real gain for employers that labour should receive inadequate reward, for such a fact implies that the trade is sickly, or that the labourers are in excess;

and labour in excess, in the long-run, is sure to visit the whole business with disorder and loss. Excess of numbers demoralises the labourers; it tends to degrade their skill by diminishing the motive for its acquisition; it embarrasses the community with a poverty which never fails to make itself felt; it weakens the strength and deadens the energy of the labourers;—in a word, it is a symptom of disease in a joint undertaking, of which it may be truly said that if one member suffer, all the members suffer also. A thriving business, with abundance of demand, entailing of necessity permanently high wages for his men, is the very ideal of prosperity, which every intelligent trader must desire. The largeness of the wage denotes that there exists the means for remunerating toil, and that is only another word for a prosperous trade. The general colonial state illustrates the rule. In the colonies wages are extremely high, but so also are profits and the interest on money lent. And why is this? Because the results obtained from new land by industry are enormous compared with the outlay required for their production. There is therefore much for the capitalist, and much also for the labourer. Each is sorely in want of the other, and to neither does the thought occur that the other is becoming rich at his own expense. No doubt, at a particular moment the labourers may exact wages from the capitalist which are not justified by the commercial position. He may not wish to break up his connection with his men; he dislikes the shutting up of his factory and loss of interest on idle machinery; he hopes for better days, and he yields for the time. But these are exceptional cases—movements to and fro in the difficult effort to determine true equilibrium. We are speaking here of

the normal state of the general principle, that labour and capital form a genuine partnership, in which the prosperity of the one party means the prosperity of the other. A well-paid, highly-skilled, thriving, and contented body of workmen, is the most solid of all foundations for the success of the employer.

The same truth holds good on the other side. The labourers have no motive for beating down the profits of capital. Capital means food, clothing, tools, and materials, without which there can be no labour, no means of livelihood for the workmen. They are fed by capital, and by capital alone; and what diminishes capital diminishes not only their enjoyments, but even their existence. A high rate of profit—except in such special cases as a siege, or a monopoly, or the like—inevitably creates a great demand for labour. Labourers are more keenly sought and more richly rewarded in Australia than in England, though profits are so large that loans at ten per cent are as safe there as at four per cent here. To attack the reward of capital is to drive it off to foreign countries, or, still worse, to prevent its existence by extinguishing the desire to save. This disastrous result may be brought about by the labourers multiplying unduly, or by extorting by persecution unwarranted wages from the employers; and thus it becomes evident how strong an interest the working classes have to adapt their numbers to the demand for labour, and not to molest the capitalist in the enjoyment of that portion of the wealth produced which falls to his share.

But, seventhly, the labourers reply, What is the just share of the capitalist? How are we to discover the real state of trade? Who can inform us what profits he is making on the orders he receives and on the

contracts which have been granted to him? He tells us that business is bad; that orders are becoming slack; that prices are drooping, or going to droop; and he asks us to accept lower wages. Who can assure us that all this is so? How can we find out the truth except by refusing his offers—that is, by striking? To this we answer, that we do not deny that there is some moral justification for a strike; that masters are only fallible mortals, and may easily be led aside from justice by selfishness; and, still more, that the uncertainty which besets modern trade renders it unjust that the decision of what is the fitting division of the produce of labour should be intrusted to a single one of the joint partners. A contest for the determination of an obscure point is not altogether irrational. But even the working classes themselves acknowledge that a strike is a coarse, unscientific, and most costly method of seeking the solution of the problem. An exceedingly small proportion of strikes achieves victory for the strikers. The strike itself is the child of ignorance and want of restraint. The suspiciousness and the cupidity of the workmen have more frequently plunged them into strikes than a well-grounded belief that the masters are straying from justice. And this being so, what a waste of wealth is incurred by striking; what a destruction of wealth is involved in what is nothing more than a voyage of discovery! Wealth ceases to be produced whilst the strike lasts. The food and clothing consumed by the strikers are a dead loss to them and to the country. They are not reproduced in goods manufactured; they are a piece of genuine and very lamentable unproductive consumption. It is a matter of urgent interest to all the parties concerned, to the employers and employed

alike, that some more refined and less wasteful process should be employed for the sole purpose of discovering what the true rate of wages ought to be. Such a process is that adopted by Mr Robert Kettle and other men of practical ability and rational good sense. Its main element is a joint deliberation over the state of the trade by a combined board of masters and workmen. Six of each class hold periodical revisions of the conditions of the market; and thereby provide the only possible remedy for counteracting the vicissitudes of the demand for labour. Both parties are placed on the same level of information; both judge with the same knowledge; each estimates the facts as it thinks fit; but each possesses the same facts. Should the two parties to the discussion disagree in equal numbers, masters and men respectively holding different views as to the situation of the business, an umpire, permanently appointed, is called in, and his decision is final. If we are not misinformed, Mr Kettle was once summoned by a divided board to exercise his office; but he was not driven to pronounce an official award as umpire. Conversation with the board made differences vanish into agreement; and a compulsive decision has never yet been found necessary. Unfortunately this system of determining wages is not universally applicable in all trades; still the recognition of the principles it proceeds upon may lead to further applications which cannot be pointed out beforehand; and as yet it has not been adopted to anything like the extent to which it can be applied.

We have now reached the question which is being tried in this country, and indeed over the greater part of Europe. The preceding discussion will assist us in coming to a judgment on its chief elements. The

demand for a reduction of the length of the day's work arose, almost accidentally, at Sunderland, and was conceded. The contagion speedily spread to Newcastle, and gave rise to a long and fierce struggle in that town. The masters, at the beginning, refused to admit that a claim for increased wages was warranted by the state of trade; but the battle swiftly drove them from their position. They were compelled to surrender to the demand of better conditions for the workmen; and the question then became one as to the form which the improvement should assume. The workmen demanded a diminution of the day's work. The masters were prepared to grant higher wages in money, but resisted a change in the standard for computing the remuneration to be given to the men. The battle raged long and furiously, and both masters and men actively sought the support of public opinion. This feeling was a most healthy element in the contest: reason and justice were all the more likely to prevail ultimately. The extorted admission that a rise of wages was due justified the strike on principle, and could not fail to damage the position of the masters; but, on the question of the length of the day's work, they received much support from the press, chiefly through the claim, sometimes avowed, but oftener implied, that the men should not be required to labour at all beyond the nine hours. It was supposed by many that the Unions would make it a part of their legislation that no man should be allowed to work more than nine hours, or receive more than the wage allotted to that portion of time. Such an enactment would have inflicted immense disorder on English trade, and have worked infinite injury to the employers. Their machinery would have stood idle; many heavy items

of expense would have been undiminished; their ability to execute urgent, and often the most valuable, orders annihilated; and very probably a large transfer of their business to foreign firms would have been the inevitable and disastrous result. The final issue, however, set these fears at rest. The nine hours have been granted; the normal day's work has been reduced by one-tenth; but the exceedingly important and critical addition has been made, that the men may work overtime and claim a separate and further remuneration for the excess. The judgment to be passed on this victory of the men is simple and clear. So far as the mere wording of the resulting agreement goes, they have obtained a compound method of claiming and calculating wages; but they have not acquired a fixed wage, nor a practical diminution of the time to be devoted to labour. The workman may, and no doubt will, work ten hours a-day as formerly; but, in computing his remuneration, he will treat on the accountant's basis of so much for the day's work and so much for overtime. But the gross amount of the wage received at the end of the day will not be determined by the mere division of time into part regular day's work, part overtime. No decree of workmen and masters combined can fix the amount of wages beyond the circumstances of the particular period. Other laws than mere agreement must come into play, if something permanent, if a wage to last even a year, is to be established. If the state of the business will not allow of a total wage exceeding five shillings a-day, no resolution can allot six shillings permanently. If the labourers are too numerous, if they compete with one another for bare subsistence, as at the east end of London, no preaching by the Union

to a starving man, in the face of many in the same condition struggling to obtain employment, will prevent him from working for more than nine hours for a wage even considerably smaller than the trade had known in past years. If the working classes resolutely intend that they shall receive permanently the same wage for the short as for the long day's work, they must do something more than decree that the day's work shall be reckoned at nine hours. They must obtain what is to a great extent beyond their control, a strong demand for their labour; and, secondly, they must insure that their numbers—the numbers of men who must perforce accept smaller remuneration rather than starve—shall bear a fit and not excessive proportion to that demand.

The very general spread of the concession of a day's work of only nine hours throughout England, and partially in other parts of Europe, reveals a fact of a very cheering and important kind. It proclaims the prosperity of trade, the demand for labour, the means capital possesses of acquiring profitable employment, the power it has of making greater wealth, and consequently its ability and will to seek for labour, and to repay it with higher reward. In other words, the prosperity of the country has placed the working classes in a position to enforce better wages, and the capitalists recognise the fact and concede the claim. They give the same wages now for a day's work diminished by one-tenth; and they grant extra payment for overtime. This is a healthy state of things all round. But then there springs up the great question, Will this benefit endure? and as that, to a not inconsiderable extent, depends on causes beyond the reach of England's control, the question rather is, Can the working classes, by their

own act, devise the means, out of the improvement they have now realised, to raise their condition permanently in the future! We hold that this great advantage may be secured to the lasting welfare of the labouring classes of England, if they will derive, from the very form of their victory, the one all-essential lesson on which their progress depends. They have won a nine-hours day's work nominally; let them convert it into a solid reality. Let them transform its nature from a method of computation into a standard of living. Let them grasp the idea that nine hours of toil ought, barring fluctuations of business, which no force can subdue, to provide them with a mode of existence as high as that which they have hitherto obtained with ten; and let them do their part in giving permanency to this raised standard. But what is it that they can do? Raise their standard of life; accustom themselves to a higher rate of comfort; realise in their own conviction that they have something to lose by imprudent marriages; advance towards the feeling of the rich that young people should not contract engagements before there is a reasonable prospect of maintaining a family; in a word, saturate themselves with the feeling that the maintenance of this raised level of comfort which the present moment brings must exist, and shall not be endangered by failure of prudence and by excessive numbers. The form that their victory has taken may do much to impress this idea on their minds. A rise of wages from 30s. to 40s. a-week may seem only one of the ordinary vicissitudes of trade—a move upwards to be soon balanced by a move downwards. But the idea that a day's work is the toil of nine hours may instil in them the feeling that what is beyond this limit makes the difference be-

tween comfort and toil, between a life worth having and a life which must be lived simply because all animals shrink from death. We believe that at the present hour there is a solid, an excellent chance of raising the standard of the life of English labourers. The world is developing rapidly on every side. The railways, added annually to new regions, are instruments of incalculable progress. The improvements acquired for locomotion mean always augmented demand for English goods. English emigrants are obtaining increased wealth from the colonies in an ever-expanding ratio. American tariffs cannot last for ever. Even M. Thiers, in the plenitude of his power, is unable to impose his commercial policy on France. Agricultural wages are rising in England: every impartial and competent authority recognises the fact. The outflow from the agricultural districts into the towns is steadily on the increase, and thereby the agricultural labourer has his chance also—and it is a good one—of raising his standard of living. The area from which English workmen are fed is ever enlarging, for the wildernesses of the world are rapidly being converted into corn-fields; and the oft-repeated assertion of Mr Mill, that the possession of land is a monopoly injurious to the welfare of the people, is shown to be a pure fallacy. The people of England have annually more corn-fields, and probably will soon have more pastures, for their maintenance. Never, we conceive, had large masses of population so fair a prospect of improving their condition as the people of England possess at this very hour. If only the multiplication of the English race is governed by prudence, the nine-hours day's work may be the source of a noble advance in civilisation.

But then, we may be answered, Is not a reduction in the time devoted to labour a diminution of the production of wealth? is it not, so far, a voluntary acceptance of relative poverty? It is: Political Economy ratifies the truth. But Political Economy is the science of wealth only: and none more cheerfully acknowledge this cardinal fact than intelligent political economists themselves. It is better, wiser, happier, to be comparatively poor; because wealth is not the end of life, but only one of the means of enjoyment and wellbeing; and these ultimate results may be injured by excessive labour in a degree which no increase of wealth can compensate. Waiving the question of the physical powers of man, a day's work of fifteen hours would multiply the creation of wealth enormously; but would humanity be a gainer by such a proceeding? Would the capacity to enjoy remain unimpaired? Would the weariness of toil find any solace in the sight of a larger supply of goods? It may well happen that a demand for increased labour may fall upon our people, when the fluctuations of the demand of our customers may render it difficult to procure the usual supplies of necessities from foreign countries with equal ease: and it is an eminent advantage of the nine-hours working day that it is susceptible of an increase of exertion involving no serious distress on the labourer. But the great point is to accustom the people to regard this as a temporary exception, and not to turn it into the basis of their supply of numbers,—to teach them to regard it as a warning against hasty marriages, and as a summons to take thought not to suffer their standard of life to drop. It has often been remarked with great correctness that the habit of making white bread the chief staple of their food has con-

ferred inestimable benefits on the English people. It has elevated their ideas of what they ought to expect to obtain, in order to render life even endurable: it has given them something to lose, as a check on imprudence: and it has enabled them to meet difficulty by having something cheaper, however inferior, to fall back upon. It fared otherwise with the Irish people when they derived their chief subsistence from potatoes. Not only was it difficult to cover the whole year with the food provided by this root, but it gave them the habit of laziness, so easy was its culture, and it even suggested the feeling that bare existence was a sufficient object of human life. Hence flowed excess of numbers, and then there was no margin when deficient harvests reduced the provision available for the population. The day of nine hours is a true correlative of wheaten bread in the cottage.

But let us not be misunderstood. We are not seeking to maintain that the labouring man is not to work for more than nine hours on each day. It is one thing to assert that it would be an enormous rise in condition for the working classes, if they could obtain with the labour of nine hours the same standard of living as they now acquire with ten, and it is another to require that they should never exceed the nine hours. The one grand point is to establish with the reduced hours a permanent condition, with numbers properly adjusted, as good as that previously accomplished with ten: if they choose still to work ten as before, the results of that additional hour are a net gain of very solid improvement. But it cannot be forgotten that, as we have already experienced, bad times will visit the trade of England; and in such times the masters will realise smaller profits or none at all, and the work-

men must work longer and receive less: no process can extirpate this incurable malady of commerce. A really bad harvest may cost a direct loss of thirty millions to the nation. Its food has to be paid for a second time, after the original outlay in cultivation: the price of bread will rise, and every one must eat less or sacrifice something. The point of interest is the general average level: and a people accustomed to comfort on nine hours' work per day, will have a still endurable position to fall back upon, and, above all, will learn and practise the responsibility of guarding against excessive multiplication. But there are two more classes to be considered in judging the effects of a reduction of the day's work—the masters and the public. Are not the interests of both injured by the change? Must not the profit of the master suffer by so immense a sacrifice? Is not their share of the result of the common operation made unjustly smaller? To this objection we answer, in the first place, that every increase of wages may be described as a diminution of the employers' profit; but the fact of the concession of shortened time being so generally conceded is a proof that the state of business will allow of this additional concession to the men, without any undue diminution of the masters' profit. But, secondly, in reply to the objection that the result of nine hours is smaller wealth, that is, a smaller fund to divide, of which, by this hypothesis, the same quantity as before goes to the workman, leaving a clearly smaller balance for profit to the capitalist,—we entirely grant, that if trade is stationary, and all the circumstances remain unchanged, what the labourer wins in time is lost to the capitalist: but is this necessarily to be regretted? May not capitalists themselves desire to see, say in some case of a population

ground down by excess of numbers and poverty, that their fellow working men should be better off, even though it be at their own cost? Is not such a renewed condition of the general life of the nation a real gain to them? It would be otherwise, no doubt, if the reduction of time led to such a diminution of profit as would damage the desire to save, and involve a lessening of the capital which is the source of the people's remuneration. But England is very far off at this moment from such a position; the fact we so often appeal to, the spread of the nine-hours movement, proves that profit is sufficiently great to make the masters willing to grant better terms to their men. And they have always the resources of an extended use of machinery, which may make them counterbalance the rise of wages. It is the machinery of England, working on the great foundation of coal, which distributes such enormous wealth to her manufacturers, her traders, and, be it well observed, to her workers also. If agricultural wages in the West of England have risen from seven shillings to twelve, and emigrants are flocking into the towns from the rural districts to get wages varying from twenty-four to fifty-four shillings a-week, it is impossible to doubt that capital is eager to employ labour, and possesses the means of highly recompensing it.

But what are we to say of the general interest of the public? Will not the prices of commodities rise, there being fewer made, and at a higher cost? And is not this a reason for deprecating the reduction of the day's work as a public misfortune? It must be granted that, all things remaining the same, a diminution of the time of labour must tend to raise the prices of goods now produced in smaller quantity and with higher pay for labour. But

circumstances do not continue unaltered; industrial life works upon a different condition. Almost every commodity which can be named is incomparably cheaper than it was five centuries ago, and for the most part modern goods are immensely superior to ancient ones. One has only to consider the character of the conveniences which we use every hour of our lives to perceive their excellence and their cheapness. The prices at which knives and scissors, earthenware and furniture, above all, such useful, however humble, contrivances as hooks and eyes, are sold, is something astonishing. This marvellous cheapness is the child of division of labour, and of the gigantic tools which it has learned to invent. A rise of prices, caused by a rise of wages, would impart an enormous impulse to increased inventions, and the world would not find the shops dearer than they had been of yore. We do not, therefore, conceive that there is ground for apprehending that a higher rate of wages, whether in time or money, would permanently stiffen the prices of commodities. The highly-paid workers of machinery are the very persons who make goods cheap; and of this we may be quite sure, that if a diminution of the day's work permanently raised the cost of goods, and thereby led to a reduction in their use, wages would not maintain the acquired saving of one-tenth of toil. The labourers themselves would be met by augmented prices for their necessities and their comforts, and then either they must obtain fewer enjoyments or consent to lengthen the hours of labour. There is no escape from this law; and the conclusion that we found upon it is, that the shortness of the day's work will have no tendency, probably for many generations to come, to create a permanent rise of general prices.

It remains to notice, in conclusion,

one topic more on which much has been said and written, especially by communists and foreigners. England is held up to infamy, as exhibiting in her social structure the most hideous contrasts between the rich and the poor. She is a scandal to the world. In no land have the rich been so rich and the poor so poor. Existence in such a country is scarcely endurable for a man of right feeling. And it is all such wilful wickedness, such deliberate selfishness, eager to desire and devour all that comes within its reach, utterly regardless of the suffering, the pain of feeling, the misery by which its enjoyments are procured. Now it is extremely desirable that such declaimers against the form of English society should state accurately what they mean. That many men are excessively rich in England, and that their tendency is to increase in numbers and to be richer than ever, is certain; that there are many poor, painfully poor, persons in this nation, is equally certain. Whether the tendency of this second class is to become more numerous, and to become also positively poorer, is another question, which we shall examine presently. But the grand question—the assumption which underlies these disparaging pictures of English life—is, whether this poverty is caused by this wealth—whether it is owing to the rich becoming richer that the poor are so poor and so numerous? On what evidence does this allegation rest? Nay, is this proposition ever affirmed by any one in distinct terms? We do not recollect any such positive affirmation plainly asserted anywhere. The fact that there are many poor, and that they stand in painful contrast with so many rich, is dwelt on; but no one says outspokenly that the riches of the rich create this painful fact. We have only to learn how these riches are procured, and the effects that

the manner of their creation generate in the poor, to perceive that the insinuated relation of cause and effect is untrue. Why is the trade of England so gigantic and so prolific of great wealth? Because wealth is every day more rapidly made in every land, and portions of that wealth are sent over to England as orders for English goods. The manufacturers receive these orders, and set labour to work. But is the advantage confined to one side only? The capitalists make good profits on these demands for goods, and the multitude of these orders creates gigantic fortunes; but do not these identical orders provide abundant employment and expanding wages for the men? Is not a much larger number of working men set to work, fed, and rewarded by the very trade which so enriches the employers? Can it be otherwise?—nay, would the workmen themselves wish it to be otherwise? Would they desire that when increasing orders arrive from America, from Russia, from Egypt and New Zealand, as these countries develop their resources, the law should step in and forbid above a tenth of these orders being executed, because otherwise the profits made on so much business would bring too many large fortunes into existence? Would they fail to reply, that this extended business brought them employment and higher wages, created a demand for more and more highly skilled workmen, was the cause why wages were steadily on the increase all over England, and that the attempt to prevent the execution of these orders would not only be impossible of attainment by any conceivable machinery, but would, if successful, limit the growth of the working classes and the raising of their wages? But then, some one may object, if the extension of business enables a manufacturer to make a hundred thousand a-year in-

stead of ten, why should he not grant larger wages to his workmen, and reduce his gains to sixty—he would then have plenty of profit in all conscience? In replying to this objection, all reference to humanitarian motives must be left out, unless the object be to advocate communism; and then that would be on moral and extra-economical grounds. The point of the question is in the question whether the assumed surplus of forty thousand a-year is made at the workmen's cost. The answer is found by looking not at the gross amount of the master's profits, but at the profit he receives on each portion of goods made. If a bale of manufactured goods is sold for £50, and the workman gets his full share of good wages for his labour in making this bale of goods, and the master not more than his reasonable remuneration for his capital and supervision, then no wrong is done to the workman; and, which is the point of the reply, no wrong is done either, if it so happens that the master can make 1000 bales, and reap the accumulated profits on them, and thereby build up a colossal fortune. It is the repetition of the same operation many times over which makes his vast wealth; but it is on the fair distribution of the product between the master and the workman on each piece of goods on which he is employed that justice depends. An enactment, in whatever way carried out, which forbade the master from making more than £60,000 a-year would only operate to create more masters. It might increase the number of very prosperous masters, but it could do nothing for the individual workman.

But we do not deny that evils, each of its own kind, are inherent in every form of human society, and that the healthful interference of legislation may be needed to protect

the weak. Abuses crop up in every system of industry which man can devise. Thus in past days the feudal aristocracy abused their power to inflict positive and grievous wrong on their inferiors; the healing remedy of the law, or the pent-up violence of a French Revolution, was needed to correct the wrong. So in our state of society one cannot refuse to see that the working classes are often pushed out of their lodgings and markets by the growth of large houses, by the opening of new streets, and other processes peculiar to modern civilisation. We do not say with Mr Hughes and Mr Hansard that a large wage shall be given

to every labourer, for we do not desire to wander in the regions of chimera, however this may be adorned with the flowers of philanthropy; but, on the other hand, we readily acknowledge that the exercise of private rights at every epoch of human history needs at times the correcting hand of the power whose duty it is to protect the public weal. Only let the distinct evil be pointed out in each case, and be traced back to its specific cause; and let the remedy be constructed on the solid ground of good sense and accurate knowledge, and not on the attractive but unstable foundation of a visionary ideal.

THE DESOLATION OF JERUSALEM.

THEY have crushed my pride! They have trampled me down in the dust!

Whither, O God, shall I flee?

To whom shall I turn?—in whom shall I put my trust?

In whom, O Jehovah, but Thee?

For Famine and Pestilence enter through all my gates,

And dark Death stalks in the street,

And Murder at every corner skulks and waits,

And Justice has bloody feet!

Thou hast trodden me down, and all I have loved is fled;

I have moaned till my soul is sore,

I have wept till my eyes are coals, and my heart is dead;

'Tis useless to crush me more.

They have plucked the babe from my breast; the child in his play,

While he laughed, they have stricken down;

The grace of woman, and manhood's strength, and stay—

And age with its hoary crown.

I have sinned—I deserve my Fate—yet hear me, O Lord!

Oh forgive them not who have set

Their feet on our necks, and Thy name and Thy law abhorred—

Whose hands with our blood are wet.

Do unto them, O God, as they unto me and mine!

Crush them, and beat them down,

Like a tempest that swoops o'er the corn, and flays the vine

With its darkening thunder-frown.

Mercy I do not demand for myself—and for them
No mercy—but justice, O Lord !
Let Thy swift sharp vengeance destroy them root and stem
With the lightning of its sword.

I have sinned ! I have sinned ! Jehovah, Thou hidest Thy face ;
But, prostrate here in the dust,
I adore Thee, the Holy One. Lift me in my disgrace,
Oh help me ! in Thee I trust.

The floods have all gone over me ; nothing now
Can torture me more or worse ;
Thy thunder hath crushed me flat, and Thine awful brow
Hath frowned, and I feel Thy curse.

Not humbled by them, but quivering under the weight
Of Thy tremendous hand ;
But Thou who hast punished wilt pardon ! Thy pity is great !
Oh raise up this desolate land !

I can wait, I can suffer, O Lord, for Thy law is just,
Though terrible is Thy wrath ;
But this people is Thine, O Lord ; in Thy promise they trust,
To guide them and show them the path.

Thou shalt lift them at last when the debt of their sins is paid,
All paid to the uttermost groat ;
And the balance shall turn in which their sins have been weighed,
And the collar be loosed from their throat.

Years shall go by. They shall creep, they shall cringe, they shall crawl,
Abject in the eyes of men ;
Loved by none, feared by few, but scorned and derided by all—
And then, O Jehovah, and then

Thy voice shall be heard,—“ Ye have drunk of the bitter cup,
Ye have drained it and drunk it down ;
Come back, O my people, come back ; I will lift you up,
And place on your heads the crown.

“ And joy shall again be yours, and triumph shall peal
And ring through your laughing ways ;
And your strength shall be mine, and your battle be mine, and your steel,
And your glory be mine, and your praise.”

W. W. S.

CHERSIPHRON.

WHEN to their utmost we have tasked our powers,
And Nemesis still frowns and shakes her head ;
When, wearied out and baffled, we confess
Our utter weakness, and the tired hand drops,
And Hope flees from us, and in blank despair
We sink to earth, the face so stern before
August will smile—the hand before withdrawn
Reach out the help we vainly pleaded for,
Take up our task, and in a moment do
What all our strength was powerless to achieve.

Unless the gods smile, human toil is vain.
The crowning blessing of all work is drawn
Not from ourselves, but from the powers above.

And this none better knew than Chersiphron,
When on the plains of Ephesus he reared
The splendid temple built to Artemis.

With patient labour he had placed at last
The solid jambs on either side the door,—
And now for many a weary day he strove
With many a plan and many a fresh device,
Still seeking and still failing, on these jambs
Level to lay the lintel's massive weight.
Still it defied him,—and worn out at last,
Along the steps he laid him down at night.
Sleep would not come. With dull distracting pain
The problem hunted through his feverish thoughts,
Till in his dark despair he longed for Death,
And threatened his own life with his own hand.

Peace came at last upon him—and he slept ;
And in his sleep before his dreaming eyes
He saw the form divine of Artemis :
O'er him she bent, and smiled, and softly said,
" Live, Chersiphron ! Who labour for the gods,
The gods reward. Behold, your work is done ! "

Then, like a mist that melts into the sky,
She vanished—and awaking, he beheld,
Laid by her hand above the entrance-door,
The ponderous lintel level on the jambs.

W. W. S.

THE HAUNTED ENGHENIO.

SOME years since, I chanced to be in Rio de Janeiro. I had just returned from a trip into the interior, and was idling away the last few days of my stay in South America, enjoying the incomparable beauty of the scenery of that sierra-locked harbour. To avoid the heat and bustle of the town, I had taken up my abode at a small venda on the northern shore of the bay; and there one evening I was as usual sitting out in the verandah, enjoying my after-dinner cigar and cup of coffee. I was gradually sinking into a reverie, trying to fancy myself surrounded by the dear ones at home, wishing that they too could with me sit and watch the ever-changing dreamy beauty of the scene. "As the Thames (below Blackwall) is to the Bay of Naples, so is the Bay of Naples to the Harbour of Rio," thought I, when my cogitations were interrupted by the sounds of a mule's hoofs pounding along the sandy beach-road which passed in front of the venda. In another moment the mule and its rider were in sight, and rather to my disgust I perceived that the latter evidently was bent on patronising the same house as myself. I did not feel in the mood to be disturbed, and the new-comer was of anything but a prepossessing appearance. So coated was he with white dust and dried mud-splashes that it was next to impossible to make him out, but I mentally put him down as some stray Portuguese or fazendiero from some neighbouring coffee estate. His mule, though seeming nearly "played out," was a powerful beast, and the saddle certainly English. I saw too, as he dismounted, that he was well armed, and wore a revolver and knife

on his hip Yankee fashion. There was no bell, and the house blacks having carefully made themselves scarce, the stranger had to lead his own mule off to the stables in rear of the venda. I had almost forgotten the new arrival, and was watching the sunset on the bald peaks of the Sugar-loaf and the Corcovado, when I heard a step in the room behind me, and the stranger came out into the verandah where I was sitting. I should hardly have recognised him, a wash and change of clothes had made such an alteration. Now, though, that the dust and mud were washed from his face and beard, I could see that he looked fearfully worn and ill. He was a good deal sunburnt, but sallow and colourless, and, though not yet a middle-aged man, stooped considerably. I still took him for a Portuguese, and was fairly startled when he addressed some remark to me in the purest English.

"You will, I trust, excuse me; but I have been living for so long amongst natives and niggers that it is quite a treat to hear one's own language again, and I could not fail to recognise you as a countryman."

"Well," said I, "for my part I confess I did not take *you* for one."

"Not likely; my best friend of six months since would hardly know me now, for I have been 'down' with swamp-fever, and half dead; and besides, I am just 'off' a 150 miles' ride in four days. Not bad work over the sierra this time of year."

We chatted on for some time, and I soon found that he was the manager of a large coffee plantation in the interior belonging to the Visconde de B——. From coffee cul-

ture our conversation naturally turned on slavery, and I remember how strongly, whilst listening to him, the idea impressed itself on my mind, that the practical views of one unprejudiced man, who really understood the habits and nature of the blacks, was worth more than all the well-meaning nonsense ever talked in Parliament, or the vindictive cant of a Jamaica Committee assembled in Exeter Hall! After a pause in the conversation, during which we each puffed away at our respective cigarettes, my new acquaintance abruptly asked, "Did you ever see or ever hear of—a black ghost?"

"Can't say I ever did," replied I, with a laugh; "thought they were always white."

"No, I don't mean *that* exactly; I mean the ghost of a black man. I have seen a good deal of native races myself—natives of every hue and species, from yellow Chinese to black niggers—but till a couple of months ago I never came across anything resembling the ghost of one. I remember once a rabid slave-owner in the Southern States trying to prove that niggers were cattle! and one of his points was that a nigger had no soul! 'for,' says the Southern chap, convincingly, 'there never was a white man yet (or a black one, for that matter) who ever set eyes on a nigger's ghost.'

"'Guess not,' struck in one of the crowd; 'a nigger's ghost (if he's got one) must be black, mustn't it? and as you only see ghosts in the night, how the thunder could you see a black ghost in a black night? no, sirc. Happen, though, if you could fix up a *white* night you might see—a few.' But if you like I will tell you a rather uncomfortable experience I myself had a short time since; mind I don't say it *was* a ghost, and you need not believe it, but it *was* uncomfortable—*very*."

I expressed my delight at the prospect of a "yarn," and so, without further preface, he commenced.

"I was telling you just now that the fazenda of which I am the manager is a very large one, and that it has been cultivated for a great number of years—that is, for *this* part of the world.

"Twenty or five-and-twenty years ago the district which we are now working was all virgin forest, and the only part of the estate under coffee and sugar was the 'Boa Vista,' the eastern end of the estate, ten miles from where we now are. The old fazenda of Boa Vista is standing yet, and is as lovely a spot as you could well find. There are almost miles of avenues of fruit-trees—mangoes, oranges, cachoes, palma, bananas, and numbers of others; whilst the roads through the coffee-mills are literally hedged with pines; but everything is going to ruin, faster and faster each year; and the place forcibly reminds you of what the Garden of Eden might have been, if, after Adam's expulsion, a joint-stock company had taken it up, gone bankrupt, and got into Chancery. It was the grandfather of the present Visconde who first founded the estate, and, according to the faint reports still current, he must have been one of the real wicked old sort one reads about as having lived in the dark ages. On his vast estates he was absolute as the Czar, and he used his power like a tiger. I have heard grim stories told of the poor blacks he had flogged to death—strong men, ay, and women too! He had a large establishment, perhaps five hundred field-hands, and he ruled them with a rod of iron. I have heard that, should he see a black touch with the handle of his hoe one coffee-tree whilst clearing the roots of another, the unfortunate

slave was sure of a hundred lashes. Well, some he murdered outright, some fled to the woods, and lived like wild beasts, whilst others, more happy, died of ill-usage and starvation; when suddenly a strange complaint appeared. By twos and threes the slaves died off, week after week, month after month, year after year. The muster-roll became smaller and smaller. The old Visconde was frantic. Bribes, medicines, and floggings were all tried, and proved equally powerless to check the strange complaint. Perhaps I am wrong to call it a complaint; it was not one—it was *poison*! Yes, poison. I myself, whilst in Brazil, have known several isolated instances of this, but never anything approaching to the wholesale “killing” that for years went on amongst those poor people at Boa Vista. I can never feel quite certain of the cause. Whether was it owing to the fearful misery of their lives, their wish to die, and so in a manner be revenged on the old tyrant who owned them, or was it a sort of contagious, murderous mania that spread through the whole mass of slaves? I myself fancy the former; but possibly both causes combined. The negro, you know, as a rule, does not go in for suicide. The Malay or Javanese does; and down South there (whilst making the Panama line), literally thousands of Chinamen hanged or drowned themselves when fever and starvation brought them low and made their lives miserable. But, from whatever cause it arose, the blacks of Boa Vista died off at a fearful rate; and at last two Portuguese factors disappeared, murdered by the slaves, no doubt. In a few years the muster-roll dwindled from 500 to 300; and, do what he would, the Visconde found the work getting ahead of the overtaxed slaves.

Then, partly owing to the mouth of the river silting up, and partly to the dykes being neglected, one rainy season a part of the river-bank was swept away, and never being repaired, hundreds of acres of level land, on part of which sugar had been successfully grown, were flooded, and soon degenerated into marsh. The natural consequence, of course, was, that the malaria soon bred fever of the most malignant type, and the blacks died off faster than ever. Finally, the old Visconde abandoned the fazenda in despair; sold off all his slaves, dispersing them in small gangs to various distant districts; bought 150 new ones, and cleared and planted the hill-ground, ten miles from the old one, where now the new fazenda stands. Though practically deserted, and now, thanks to the ever-increasing marsh, rendered quite uninhabitable owing to the fever, the plantations (where not entirely overgrown with jungle and *sapakyia*) are still valuable; so every year, when the picking-time comes, a party of thirty or forty blacks is sent over to get what coffee they can; every year the yield becomes less and less, and this year not more than 800 arrobas were gathered. We should have got more, but the fever suddenly appeared, though I took every precaution—keeping the people away from the low ground towards evening, and giving them extra rations, including spirits, and changing the gang every few days. In spite of all it attacked us, and in three days we had a dozen on the sick-list. I, of course, gave up work and retreated to the hills: one poor fellow sank after we got home, though. Well, the coffee, or at least a good part of it, was picked, and out on the drying-grounds, but as the blacks could not be left there to take care of it, it stood a fair chance of being stolen,

since the river ran close past the terreiros, and a canoe-load could be taken in a few minutes. Some one had to take charge of it, and as the only man I could trust besides myself had only just arrived from England with his wife and family, and had not yet gone through a course of tropical hardening as I had, I thought it best to do the work myself. We generally sent a couple of hands over every morning to turn and spread the coffee. As the place was safe enough by day, they remained there, and towards evening heaped it up again and returned home; so the night was the only time I had to care for. Accordingly, after a day's work—ploughing, draining, sugar-planting, or clearing forest-land—I used to lie down for a couple of hours in my clothes, be called at about 9 P.M., and ride over to the deserted old fazenda of Boa Vista. I had a half-unbroken mule—not the one I am riding now, but a beast that would hardly break her gallop the whole way there—so it did not take me long to get to the clearing (though I had a river and two wide swamps to cross *en route*). The old Engenhio was, of course, situated close to the drying-grounds, and there I used to establish myself for the night. The left wing of the ruinous old building had been formerly the sugar-house, and in it I used to tether my mule; and with the help of a bundle of cigars and an occasional nip of spirits and quinine, I should have passed the night comfortably enough had it not been for the mosquitoes. I used to sit there (myself hid in the deep shadow of the building) and watch the white mist, reeking with poisonous miasma, seething up from the great marsh. How closely it enveloped one, and how strangely and fantastically each well-known object around loomed

through it! The brightest moonlight could but dimly struggle down on the weather-stained and time-worn old ruins, so dank and cold and desolate. No sound ever broke the silence but the occasional cry of some night-bird from the marsh, the chattering of bats, and the never-ceasing hum of the mosquitoes. Oh how dreary those long nights were! I used to watch the moon (when now and then I could get a glimpse of it, pale and hazy, through the drifting fog), and guess how long it would take to sink behind the forest-clad sierra; and often I have quite longed to catch sight of some skulking rascal making free with the coffee. I don't think much provocation would have been required to make me pull trigger with a clear conscience, but no one ever came; and from what I afterwards heard, I believe a pile of dollars would have been pretty safe, for the old fazenda had, I found, a 'bad name,' and both blacks and Portuguese are, you know, superstitious enough for anything. So I fancy that not a man in the district would have ventured about the old place after nightfall. Well, one night I had ridden over as usual, though dead tired and sleepy, as you may think, for I had spent the whole day working in a rice-swamp under a grilling sun. I had almost reached the fazenda. The last half-mile or so of the road ran through an avenue of the finest bamboos I ever saw. They must be fifty feet high at the very least, and met overhead in an arch. In daylight it was a shady ride, but by night, even when the moon was well up, it was all but pitch dark, and of course one had to ride at a foot's pace. The avenue was quite straight, so that, like coming out of a tunnel, you could see an arch of light in front of you long before you reached it. Beyond the end of

the bamboos the road swept sharp round to the right, for perhaps a hundred yards or so, through scattered clumps of orange-trees, guava-scrub, &c.; beyond which, on the right, was the half-ruined Enghenio or machine-house, and directly fronting it, on the other side of the road, the terreiros or drying-grounds, now scraped clean of the year's accumulation of weeds, and covered with heaps of half-dried coffee. I had ridden slowly through the bamboo avenue, and was within a few yards of where the white moonlight streamed across the road at its termination, when my mule gave a start aside and suddenly stopped short. No doubt a snake was crossing the path, or she had scented some skulking puma. But at the moment I was half asleep in the saddle (the sun had been more than usually powerful that day, and I confess I was thoroughly fagged). I was thinking (almost dreaming, perhaps) of the former history of the ruined fazenda, and mixed up with these thoughts of the past were vague speculations as to the present—the chances of a meeting with coffee thieves, &c., when the sudden halt of my mule brought me back in a moment to a state of thorough wakefulness. Instinctively I grasped my revolver, and was ready for action. For some time, as I advanced, I had heard, without listening to them, the various and ordinary night-sounds of a tropical swamp, the dabbling and splashing of water-fowl, the endless chorus of frogs and suchlike; but now, after the first moment of attention, I became convinced that a fresh sound was added to them. Surely I could not be mistaken. No; there it was—a sound that I had heard for hours together every day of my life at the hill fazenda—the quick regular beat of a water-wheel, and

the steady rush of water through the sluices. In a moment it flashed across me that the suspected thieves had come early, and were making a night of it, coolly cleaning our coffee with our own machinery, which was still in a condition to do its work in a sort of way.

“A touch of the spur set the mule going again, and in a few seconds I was round the bend, and caught a glimpse of the upper storey of the Enghenio looming up above the orange-clumps and guava-scrub. I noticed the old building seemed to be lit up, and I could hear the rush of water and the beat of the wheel plainer than ever. I guided my mule off the road so as to approach without being heard, and, revolver in hand, cantered through the orange-grove. As I first caught sight of the terreiro, I shall never forget my astonishment at the sight before me. I had only an end view of the Enghenio, but four of the front windows seemed to be open, as I could see the broad streams of light thrown strongly across the drying-ground, which, strange to say, was literally crowded with blacks. I could see them distinctly—their dusky forms flitting backwards and forwards from the drying-ground to the Enghenio, carrying in the coffee in large baskets. Several had torches, and I could even distinguish a couple of overseers directing the work. The blacks I noticed were all working silently, and ‘at the run.’ The first idea that struck me was, that one of our worthy neighbours, whom I knew to be quite capable of robbery or anything else, had brought down the whole of his people, and was intent on making a clean sweep of our coffee. Insensibly I slackened speed as I dodged my way through the last clump of orange-trees. As I did so a thicker wreath of mist

seemed to seethe up from the marah; the ruddy flow of light from the open windows appeared to fall out, and the hurrying slaves, whom a few moments before I had so distinctly seen, seemed to melt away into the darkness. Another stride carried me clear of the orange-trees at a point within twenty yards of the Enghenio. I pulled up with a quick jerk, utterly bewildered, for there, close before me, was the drying-ground, covered with its regular heaps of coffee, not one displaced—nothing stirring, nothing visible—the whole place as silent and solitary as when I last visited it the night before. I sat there for perhaps a minute, unable even to think, but with a strange feeling of awe creeping over me; for up to that moment it had never struck me that I was subject to an illusion. Even then I could hardly force myself to believe that what I felt morally certain I had actually *seen* was not real, and I half expected to see the troops of blacks come hurrying out of the Enghenio again. No—not a trace of them. Then I thought of the great water-wheel. I had *heard* that going, and *could* not be mistaken. With a feeling not far from dread I rode past the Enghenio towards the sugar-house, which was the right wing of the building (the machinery was all in the centre, and the coffee-stores in the left wing nearest to me). As I slowly rode along the front, I saw that the windows, from which so shortly before I had seen the streams of light issuing, were closed as usual, the shutters, grey and steaming with damp, shining coldly in the pale moonlight. The centre door, leading into the machine-house, was fast, and the rusty padlock and chain seemed untouched. The sugar-house was open on one side, and into this I rode my mule, dis-

mounted, and tethered her, and then unfastened a small lantern which I always brought with me, struck a light, and proceeded to explore the building. Nothing seemed changed; there was no trace of any one having visited it since I was last there. Then I went into the machine-house. Squeezing between the mandioca-mill and a disused sugar-press, I made my way to the part of the building partitioned off for the water-wheel. I knew *it* would satisfy me. Several of the planks had rotted, and fallen back into the watercourse below; they had left a large gap in the partition, through which I looked at the wheel. A cold chill passed through me as I did so. The broad floats were as dry as tinder, and the wheel itself was held locked by a fallen rafter which had passed through its arms—it had not moved for a year; and there, twelve or fifteen feet below me, I could see the water unconfined by sluice or shuttle, which had long since been washed away, running silently along the shoot, and not even touching the lowest float of the wheel. Two or three bats, disturbed by the light, fluttered up past me, and they were the only signs of life I could see. Then I *knew* that what I had seen could not be real—but how to account for the noise of the wheel and the stampers too! How my head ached that night! (it does now, for that matter;) but I sat there in the sugar-house puzzling over the strange sight I had seen till near daylight, and then rode home again. I could eat no breakfast, I remember, but went out to see some fresh land they were clearing; but I turned ill, and had to come home; and by evening I was down with swamp-fever, and raving. I had a baddish turn of it; and a precious row, they tell me, I made. And the odd thing

is, that I can remember many of the delusions which I had then, as clearly as if they had been facts ; but the real facts I have either forgotten entirely, or only remember as one does a dream. Now, sir, that's my story, and it is for you to judge whether it was the fever that brought me the niggers' ghosts, or the niggers' ghosts the fever. I hope I am not in for another dose of it ; my head feels very queer. Well, anyhow, I have had a long day, and so will turn in—good-night."

He rose, and, shivering slightly, moved off to his room ; and I, after musing a while over the strange story which I had heard, followed his example. The next morning, when I came down to breakfast, I asked José, the factotum of the venda, if the stranger had yet gone out.

"No, Senor, he's ill—has the fever, and I have been with him for the last two hours : he wants to speak to you, Senor."

Accordingly I repaired to his

room, and found him, as José had said, down with fever ; he was quite sensible, though, and thanked me for coming.

"I thought very likely you would be crossing the bay to Rio this morning ; if you do, would you kindly ask the English doctor to give me a call ? I have got a touch of this wretched fever back again. José tells me that early this morning I was talking a great deal of nonsense, but I hope I did not disturb or bore you last night."

I assured him to the contrary, and in the course of the morning found out and sent the doctor to see him. His attack was very light, and in a few days he was about again, but he never again mentioned the long night's watching in the old Enghenio. Was the fever-madness in him when he saw that strange sight at the abandoned fazenda ? Or was it so when he told me the story before his second attack ? I'm sure I know not, but it was a strange weird tale either way.

[PORTIONS of these adventures have been from time to time published in newspapers and periodicals. Those which are authentic are all drawn from sources which must greatly resemble each other—viz., the ship's log or the officers' journals; and the facts must be the same in all. The narrative here given is from the MSS. of an officer well entitled to a hearing; and no part of it has been given at second-hand, or taken from any printed account.—ED.]

A SAILOR'S NARRATIVE OF THE LAST VOYAGE OF H.M.S. MEGÆRA, AND
OF THE PRESERVATION OF HER CREW ON THE ISLAND OF ST PAUL.

"They that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters; these see the works of the Lord, and His wonders in the deep."

THOUGH there be few living in England who have not heard of the stranding of H.M.S. Megæra in the year of grace 1871, yet the whole story of our peril, and of how great deliverance God vouchsafed to us, has never, I think, till now been written. It is worthy of a lofty strain and of an eloquent writer; but, for default of such, readers will perhaps accept the account which follows, told, as it is, with much plainness of speech. Listen then, ye landsmen and brother sailors, and you shall hear of hair-breadth escapes and stirring adventures, the like of which perils, though many may encounter, yet few live to relate.

CHAPTER I.—THE HAZARD ON THE OCEAN.

It was on the 28th of May, early in the morning, that the Megæra steamed out of Simon's Bay, bound for Sydney. She had 333 souls on board, the number being thus made up—viz., 42 officers, 44 marines, 180 ship's company, and 67 boys. The day was Sunday, dear to sailors as of good omen for the coming voyage. Alas for the omen! we must say, now that we know what a dark fate was behind us. But the "Sunday sail," the fair weather, the lovely scenery, had their full effect on our spirits on that morning. And, cheered by the hope of a prosperous voyage, we could note with delight the buildings and features of the land from which we were parting. Behind us, old Simon's town at the foot of the mountain was still half hidden in the mist. Soon, emerging from the smaller indent, and entering False Bay, we

passed the lighthouse, perched with so much travail on the Roman Rock, and the unshapely insular mass called Noah's Ark, all on the right. Away to the left, still shrouded in fog, as if an early appearance were a thing unknown to it, lay the happy town of Kalk Bay, the resort of the newly married. Anon, glowing in many colours, the Table Mountain, with the lower hill, and the rich valley of Constantia, opened to our view, across the broad Flats yellow with long extended sands. Then we passed the Hottentot Hollands, whose tops reflected the rays of the early sun, and whose sides were beautiful with light and shadow, and with colour; and after that we had soon done with waters of the coast. The sea-birds above, flying and screaming round us, the long sweep of the waves below, the salt breeze, the well-seen arch of

the horizon, all testified to the same fact—we were in the great ocean.

One is fain to dwell on the last happy days that the ship ever saw; fate had not many in store for her. That Sunday was a pleasant day, and so were the Monday and the Tuesday which followed. By day we had only agreeable occupation as the vessel dashed merrily along, and by night we could gaze on the southern heavens, bright with unnumbered stars, and into whose depths the eye pierces so as to raise a feeling of great awe. The moon shone on us too; but her beauty we were acquainted with of old: it was the southern constellations, the glorious signs never seen from Old England, and pre-eminent among them the resplendent Cross, which gained all our attention—the young hands lost in admiration of the sight, the old ones pointing out the stars.

The scene changed on Wednesday the 31st. There was an end of easy luxurious steaming, no more exhilarating days, no more spangled nights; but tarpaulins and water-proofs on all sides—slippery decks, dripping ropes. The damp made its way everywhere—boots, towels, linen, our very beds, damp, and the salt in the cellars half water. It was difficult to find a dry berth; and if one were found, it was difficult to occupy it, for the ship tumbled along in a most disturbing manner: so our hitherto cheerful party was suddenly depressed. We were encountering heavy squalls, with much rain.

We had parted with our bright clear sky; but that, after all, is but an ordinary inconvenience to the men, who are said to be "born for all weathers." Damp foggy days, such as we now experienced, kept us all much on the alert, which, under such gloomy circumstances, was an advantage. But there was as yet nothing to cause the least alarm, for we were safe out in the open sea, far away from

rocks and shoals. As for wind or wave, what cares a sailor for either as long as he has faith in his ship and in himself! No, there was no alarm all through this mist and wet, which lasted to the 5th of June; neither was there alarm on that day when masses of clouds, piled one on another up the sky, gave reason to expect a furious gale. All hands were turned up to shorten sail. Every sailor, as he looked at the sky after she was made all snug, predicted the foulest weather. But everybody was wrong, for by noon the clouds had dispersed, leaving only a strong breeze, which, by the 6th, blew from the N.W.—a fair wind, if a stiff one, and sent us along our course ten knots an hour.

The pleasure of a thorough sailor comes in many forms. A few days since, soft breezes and sunny skies made us happy. Now it was a delight of another kind to find her bounding through the water, dashing over the billows like a fiery horse, while great ocean-birds, albatross, molly-wakes (large brownish birds very like albatross), Cape pigeons, and graceful sea-swallows, careered about her masts and ropes, along her wake, and across her course, swooping and screaming as she struck the foam from her fore-foot. Then, too, there was the cheering thought that these rolls and plunges were taking us rapidly towards our destination. And now the absorbing question was, When will she reach Sydney? Some said the 8th July, some a little before, some a little after; and bets were made and much sage speculation indulged in. Thus do short-sighted mortals rack their brains to determine the exact order of events which are never to happen at all.

There was, however, a fair prospect of a quick voyage; for, if the breeze which set in on the 5th did but hold, it would soon waft us—blow and toss us would be a truer

expression—into the region of steady westerly winds, which would in all probability follow us to Sydney. It did hold for 48 hours, and we did encounter the westerly breeze exactly as we had hoped for it, on Wednesday, the 7th of June. That day we made 195 miles; the next, 214 miles. Was not this enough to make us presume that that day month would find us in the haven where we would be?

It is not to be supposed, though, that we were enjoying a satisfaction which any, save sailors, could appreciate. The sea was running mountains high. The ship rolled like a drunken man; she shipped a few tons of water every now and then, completely deluging any unfortunate wights whose duty or fancy took them in the way of the inundation. No; it could be pleasant to those only who were inured to the sea; and perhaps not to them, unless it were accompanied by the knowledge that their voyage was in course of rapid accomplishment. But we were speeding along; so there was no bar to our contentment, and we turned in on the night of the 8th June, hopeful and merry.

On the morning of the 9th she still sped swiftly before the wind, but the jokes, the merriment, the betting, had ceased, and anxious faces clustered round the tables of the different messes at breakfast. An old foreboding, which weighed on us at the commencement of our voyage, but which the fair wind and the riotous pace of the ship had dispelled, came back now with a real form, and dashed our short-lived joy. Had not we, had not all who loved or cared for us, been appalled at the reports of the *Megæra's* condition? had we not dreamed of and imagined disaster, until many days of immunity brought back light hearts and smiling faces? Here, then, this morning, was the justification of

our dread. We were face to face with imminent danger, if not with death; and the meeting was so sudden and so stern as to discompose the boldest and most reckless among us. A leak was reported to have been sprung in the night,—not some moderate influx which might be discharged as fast as it could invade us, and the cause of which might soon be remedied by the skilled hands among our crew, but a terrible inroad of the sea by some channel as yet unknown, which was raising the level of the water in the ship's hold at the rate of an inch every hour! Now the simplest mind will understand that we must keep under this ruinous stream, or the rest of our lives would be reckoned by hours and minutes. It was not without reason, then, that there were grave faces about the breakfast-table on the 9th of June.

In the morning watch it was discovered that there were 17 inches of water in the engine-room; and as the ship was very broad at bottom, this depth indicated an immense quantity. The ship's pumps were manned at once, and the bilge-pumps set in motion, and by these means the water was at first kept under and reduced to 13 inches. The crew having thus temporarily gained the mastery over the hostile element, our next endeavour was to detect the leak. But this was no easy matter, as the water which we had shipped covered the ship's framework to some height. Moreover, inside the iron plating her bottom was lined with brickwork and cement. The engineers, however, set themselves to search for the spot where she had given way, and in doing so had to grope about, almost, and sometimes entirely, under the offensive bilgewater as it was swayed from side to side by the rolling of the ship. But as, until the leak should be discovered, nothing could be done to

amend our case, except by incessant pumping (which was vigorously sustained), the period of the engineers' anxious and miserable search was opportunity for reflection. And reflection was the most distressing occupation in which one could be engaged—worse a thousand times than the severest manual exertion—worse than crawling like reptiles about the dark sloppy abysses near the vessel's keel. For what a state of things was presented to the mind that had time to think! Here we were in lat. $39^{\circ} 40'$ S. and long. $44^{\circ} 22'$ E. on the Indian Ocean, more than a thousand miles from any land. The Cape of Good Hope, it was idle to think of returning to, as the strong westerly gale would have opposed us all the way. Sydney was more than a month's voyage from us. There were some tiny islands in mid-ocean, which might be reached in a week or so, if we could keep afloat so long and keep our engines effective. But how many chances were there against our doing that! A leak in an iron ship, unless it arises from some well-ascertained accident, suggests dangers far beyond its own solitary threatening, bad though that may be. It suggests the probability that the whole of the plates may be so attenuated as to yield at any moment to the pressure of the waves, or a blow from a heavy sea. To deal with the one active danger, therefore, is no more than crushing one head of the hydra. Ninety-nine more are ready to assail you. The danger is not distinct and local, but all that encloses you is insecure and treacherous. Only a rotten film between you and eternity!

In this fearful state of things it is hoped that all looked to God for help. But the Captain and every one concerned in the charge of the ship, and of the lives and property which she carried, looked anxiously to the means which were yet at

their disposal for averting, under Providence, the impending doom. First, we had the advantage of discipline, which though wellnigh obsolete in Britain, yet lingers here and there about the army and navy. Yes, we had discipline on board, and were sure, therefore, that the muscles, thews, and sinews, as well as the brains of an active and intelligent crew, would in concert labour to their utmost for the common good. We had no dread of selfish wrangling, of deadly panic, or of divided action. The Captain, whatever he may have felt, showed no sign of doubt or hesitation in this grave conjuncture, but turned a bold front to the danger; and he was ably seconded by all in authority under him. Thus a moral force, as well as the habit of obedience, was felt throughout. This was our great reliance, without which anything else which might tell in our favour would be of no avail. Then there was the possibility that, before the water should rise too high inside, we might discover and stop or mitigate the present leak, and that we might gain a harbour before she should give way in another place. Thirdly, we had, as yet, a fair wind, and our engines were in full vigour: we might possibly, therefore, by unremitting labour at the pumps and buckets, keep down the water long enough for sails and steam to take us to port. These were all the means which we could control; and there was besides the chance that Heaven might send some large ship into our company. But when the dread account came to be totalled up, the chances looked so much against us that, however boldly we might be able to meet our end, the end was to be prepared for as the most probable of contingencies. Men decided bravely, they gave orders bravely, and bravely men wrought; but inwardly what thoughts must have arisen of home, and dear

kindred and friends, and of that other world that might be so near! Resolution and constancy there were without, but within was the darkness of the shadow of death. How could it be otherwise when we recognised our desolate condition and the treacherous hull that carried us, and saw and heard all round rushing, surging, roaring like fiends, or wild beasts eager for their prey, "the yesty waves" that

"Confound and swallow navigation up"?

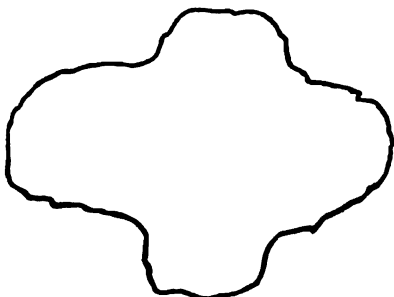
From the 9th to the 13th of June we sailed along still in a state of apprehension and uncertainty. We had not found the leak, but still sought for it; and we devoted all our strength to the discharge of the water. After a while the leak gained on us, and then more pumps were manned, and a party was ordered to bale out by hand with iron buckets, which were hoisted up, sixty in an hour, to the sound of the fiddle and fife. But, spite of these efforts, the water rose higher and higher. We could hear it splashing from side to side as the ship rolled. It sounded like a continual threatening, and made our hearts sicken.

On Saturday the 10th there was a violent gale, with a heavy sea running, the ship going sometimes twelve knots. On Sunday the weather was not much better: but we had divine service under the topgallant fore-castle. The litany and the hymn for sea were, however, all that we could get through, the motion was so distracting. And the next day, Monday the 12th, this motion not only hindered the operations of our hands, but it did worse: it prevented the pumps from working well, with what consequence I need not say. On this day, too, the rain came down in quantities, and we were visited by sea-birds, which flew about all day. On the 13th we redoubled our

efforts to get a part of the hold dry, and put on a hundred men to bale from daylight. We resorted, too, to a new device—that is, we plugged up some of the communications by which the water spread itself from one to another compartment in the depths of the vessel. We thus cut off the stoke-hole from the next forward compartment, and the engine-room from its neighbour, and by this means considerably narrowed the space over which our search had to extend; for there was soon strong reason to believe that the rupture must be somewhere within a certain twelve-foot length measured along the bottom. One of the engineers wrought all day in the water seeking it. He crawled about under the engines and boilers. When the side of the ship on which he happened to be was the lower one, the water was quite over his head, and, after keeping below it as long as nature could endure, he would come up to breathe like a great sea-fish.

At one o'clock on the morning of the 14th, after five days of dire suspense and of severe exertion—during which, however, we had been running rapidly on our course—we ascertained the situation of the leak. It was in a hidden recess under the coal-bunker, where it could be seen only by prostrating one's self in the foul bilge-water, putting the head through a small hole and then peering up into a narrow space, about 2 feet high, between two frames. Thus placed, the observer could see it clearly enough about 7 feet from him, and the water welling up through it. It was something to have ascertained thus much; but there was no dealing with the evil, or even approaching it, except by cutting a hole large enough to admit the hands through an iron frame. To do this exercised our patience for twenty-four hours more, at the end of which time we could

put our hands upon the orifice. When we first saw the place from a distance, the jet of water looked so steady and round that we flattered ourselves with the fancy that a rivet had dropped out—which might be replaced. But, alas! it was no lost rivet. It was a hole of something about this shape and size, fairly



Shape of the leak, about full size.

worn through one of the iron plates; and the whole plate had been worn so thin, that throughout its surface it yielded and bent under the pressure of the hand like a sheet of tin. Thus our fears were realised as to other and greater dangers threatening than the immediate danger with which we were grappling.

The first order given consequent upon the detection of the leak, was to thrum a sail, and to stuff with yarn a mattress about 12 feet square and something under a foot thick, the intention being, of course, to gird these on under the ship's bottom, and so to stanch the jet that was invading us. The thick mattress was intended to fill the hollow that would be caused between the sail and the ship's side by the projection of the keel. The mattress was not, however, applied, for before it was ready another expedient was thought preferable.

That device, therefore, stood over for the present; and it was next thought that a plate of iron covered with gutta-percha might be screwed to the inner surface of the damaged

plate, so as to strengthen it and plug the leak, through which we could now see the water issuing as if from a fountain, the aperture being about 2 inches by $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches. But the objection to this attachment of another plate was, that the ship's plate had not strength enough to hold its intended support. It was like that old garment spoken of in Scripture, by putting into which a piece of new cloth the rent was made worse. There was no hold for screw or rivet; and there was great danger that in attempting to make a connection we might make fresh leaks in the frail covering, or, what would have been fatal, force out the plate altogether. To obviate this risk it was determined to fit the supporting plate with a long rod or clamp to be screwed into a sounder part of the iron work, so that the new plate might press gently and evenly against the old rotten one, without perforating or disturbing the latter. Now it should have been mentioned that the rotten plate was about 6 feet by 4 feet in surface, just holding together, and just holding to the ship, so that the fitting of the plug-plate was an operation of most dangerous character; and yet, like many another operation, it had to be performed as the only alternative against imminent destruction. This thought was of course present to the minds of all. Some of us—half perhaps—might have made another effort for life in the boats, but the other half would assuredly have found that day a watery grave if the plate should give. And yet there was no confusion, not even a departure from ordinary routine further than the necessity of our work demanded. It has been shown that we assembled for divine service on Sunday: it may be added that the duties and meals were regularly taken.

It was soon evident that the plate with the gutta-percha had effected

no real improvement; the water no longer came in in a straight jet, but it oozed through all round the plug. Discouraging news this. But our resources were not utterly exhausted, for we had a diver's dress on board, and it was determined to send a man down, when there should be opportunity, with an outside plate fitted with a spindle, which, being passed by him through the hole which caused the leak, could be screwed tight with a nut to another plate applied inside. It was owing to a circumstance quite out of ordinary course that we had this diver's apparatus on board. Those to whom diving is a mystery may like to know that the dress, which is made to cover the diver's whole person and to leave a space within for air, is quite wind and water tight, so that when the man is down he can breathe with tolerable freedom though under water, being supplied with air through a tube from above. If any should desire to see what he looks like, here is his picture.

the wind exposed us to the risk of being pooped. But we had only a



On the 15th of June we shaped our course for the island of St Paul's, which we had not intended to sight, as the directions do not recommend a near approach during the winter months. We were but 292 miles distant from it. Thus we had got 180 miles nearer to the island since the leak appeared. In the evening of that day we made 206 miles before a strong wind. More might have been done if we could have used our sails; but sailing caused her to overrun her screw, so that we should have lost the help of the bilge-pumps, which are worked by the engine, if we had not used steam,—and that we could not have afforded.* Besides taking from her speed, this steaming slower than

choice of evils, of which delay was less than letting the pumps be idle. Now that we were within 100 miles of land, hope began to revive in our hearts. For a week we had been expecting every day to sink; and if we should yet escape, it would be by the narrowest chance. Every one was now working his utmost to keep her afloat, officers, boys, and men all taking their spells at the pumps, which clanged on incessantly. The leak was increasing.

On the night of the 16th, supposing ourselves to be about 30 miles from land, we lay-to in a furious gale; but, wonderful to tell, we found when we had put her head to the wind that the leak stop-

* If the sails do all the work there is no resistance for the screw, and therefore danger of breaking the shaft; so in these circumstances either sail must be shortened or the engines stopped.

ped. Something that had been thrown overboard was supposed to have been sucked into the hole, and thus to have effected a relief which all our skill failed to accomplish. The water came in again when we bore up, but it was something to get a few hours' respite.

Morning broke on the 17th so hazy that we could hardly see a mile. We supposed the island to be 30 or 40 miles off, as has been said. All at once the fog lifted up, giving us a long view astern. Imagine our feelings when we made out the land about 9

miles off! God be praised for His mercy! Another push, and we are saved! Four boilers at full speed soon sent us out of the mountainous billows on which we had been tossed, into comparatively smooth water. A little while, and we were at anchor in 14 fathoms. Thus ended our danger of foundering in the Indian Ocean. But we had other perils to encounter; and but that we were mercifully dealt with by Providence, and well cared for by our captain and officers, we could not have been alive now to tell our story.

CHAPTER II.—THE LAST DAYS OF THE MEGERA.

As soon as possible after we dropped anchor, the diver was sent down. He descended twelve times before he completed his observations. When at length he reported, it was to the effect that the small part of the outside of the ship which he had examined was generally clean; but that near the leak there were several rusty spots, all so like each other, and so like the leak, that he could decide on which of them was now admitting the water only by putting his hand over them in succession, until he felt the suction at the real opening. Any one of these places might suddenly become a leak. He said, further, that he had found two adjacent plates, the corners of both of which had been knocked away about 4" by 1½" at the joint; also that the plates were so thin that he could easily have put his knife through, "*only he didn't like to do so.*" Further forward, near the stoke-hole, he saw a great quantity of rust, and was of opinion that in that place too she was not far from leaking.

An examination inside showed some of the frames to be eaten

away and separated from the ship's bottom. From one of them was thus detached the leaky plate, which was therefore quite unsupported.

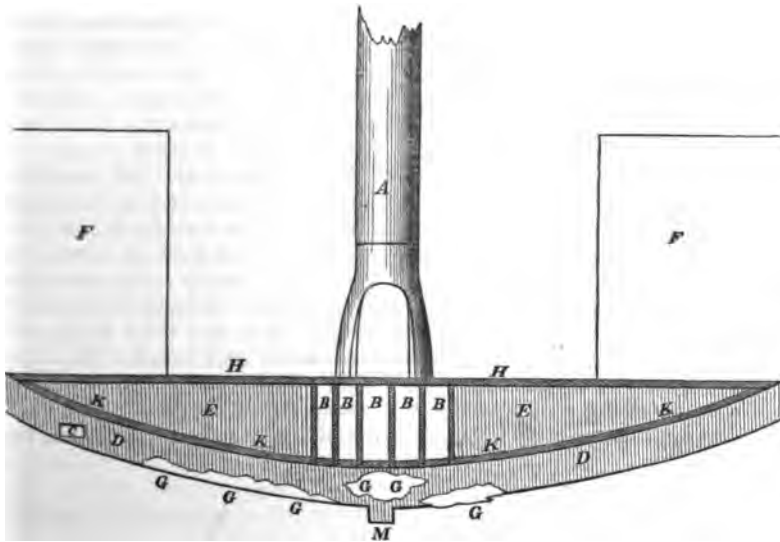
Besides all this, the pumps were now constantly found to be choked with pieces of iron from an inch to an inch and a half long and a quarter of an inch thick, some of them having cement adhering to them, proving them to be pieces of the decayed frames.

It must be added that we had now but 150 tons of coal on board.

Thus, though the leak was said to be stopped,* there were but too many reasons to fear that the ship was breaking up. In this crisis it was for the captain to determine what should be done, and Captain Thrupp decided boldly and ably. After giving due weight to all the circumstances, he announced to his assembled officers and crew that he did not consider that he would be justified in attempting to continue the voyage, and that he was about to land the crew and the stores, and to make the best provision in his power for keeping them alive and healthy till help should arrive. All

* By means of the plate with the spindle before described.

had awaited in respectful silence the captain's decision; but when that was given, a cheer burst from all hands, showing how general was the



A, Main-mast.

B, B, B, Fore-and-aft girders, supporting the mast.

C, Hole cut through the frame or rib to get to the leak.

D, The frames or ribs of the ship.

E, Iron plating supporting bunkers.

F, Coal-bunkers.

G, G, Showing how frames were eaten away.

H, Stoke-hole plates.

K, K, $\frac{3}{4}$ -plate bolted on to frames to strengthen the ship near the main-mast.

M, Keel of the ship outside.

conviction that going to sea again would be suicidal, and how general was the relief that was felt now that a landing had been resolved on.

I am anticipating a little in what I have just written, for the captain did not announce his decision until Sunday the 18th, and before that time we had made some acquaintance with the caprices of the weather about St Paul's. It has been said that we dropped our anchor in comparatively smooth water. But the smoothness was apt to be disturbed from time to time by terrible squalls, which nothing could resist. Our anchor lay in black sand, where it should have been, and where indeed it was, fast enough. Nevertheless, it was soon found that we were drifting out to sea. We used our steam to stop this seaward mo-

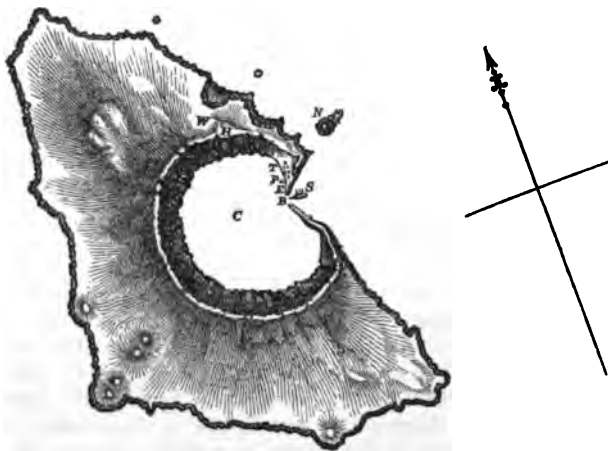
tion, and hove the anchor, which came up with surprising readiness. It had parted across the shank, and both flukes were still fast in the sand. By the help of the steam we were soon in again, and we tried our luck with another anchor, but this time closer to the shore. Captain Thrupp was called every two hours in the night between Saturday and Sunday. The night was comparatively cold, the thermometer marking 48°, which added to the distress of the occasion. At daylight it was clear that we were drifting again; and again we found that we had lost our anchor. We steamed in a third time, and anchored once more. Thus we had lost two anchors before it was determined to remain at St Paul's.

That it may be understood with

what calm order everything was conducted, notwithstanding the continual jeopardy in which we were, the pumps never ceasing their melancholy clang, and notwithstanding the repeated sudden alarms which we experienced by day and night, let me note that on Sunday morning the Captain read prayers as usual. The General Confession, the Collect for Ash-Wednesday, and the Lord's Prayer were fervently and solemnly joined in by that whole assembly, who were awaiting, as it seemed to them, a verdict of life or death. It was not until after this interesting service that the Captain made his announcement. He accompanied it with a reminder that it would be necessary to enforce

strict discipline, and that insubordination of any kind would be severely dealt with; and he concluded with the expression of his hope that every one would work "with a will." His speech having been greeted with ringing cheers, he gave the order to commence landing stores at once.

The island of St Paul, on which we were about to lead a Crusoe life for so long as it might please God to spare us, is a speck in the Indian Ocean, its latitude being about 38° 43' S., and its longitude about 77° 38' E. It is two miles long and a mile and a half broad. The form of it will be understood from the accompanying diagram. The whole island may be described as the rim



*C, Crater, Inland Sea.
B, Bar, 6 feet water on it.
E, Esplanade on the rocks.
P, Pier.
T, Town.*

*N, Nine-pin Rock.
H, Hill Station, 860 feet.
S, The Ship.
W, Water Pools, 3 tuns.*

of a large basin, believed to be the crater of an extinct or dormant volcano, with a piece broken out so as to form the bar. The sides of the crater rise to the height of 860 feet in places, and are almost precipitous. On the bar are 12 feet of water at the top of spring-tides: when we arrived there were 6 feet on the bar.

The crater is 25 to 30 fathoms deep. Two Frenchmen were living on the island. They came off to us, and, through a Jersey man on board, we got from them a good deal of information concerning the place to which we had been so providentially led. They could not speak a word of English.

After announcing that he had decided to remain, Captain Thrupp landed, selected his sites, and took order for encamping or hutting his people and stores. On board the discharge of provisions from the ship was so vigorously proceeded with, that by dark our four months' stock was all on shore. All assisted in this most important duty—officers, cooks, stewards, were to be seen bending their backs to hard burdens, and doctors and paymasters pulling away at the ropes. One party of officers landed a 20-foot spar, and dragged it 500 feet (which was about half-way) up an almost perpendicular cliff, intending to set it up as a flag-staff, which it afterwards became. A good many soft hands were by this work much blistered before night; but, on the whole, the exercise and occupation did every one good. Before dark we had, by advice of the Frenchmen, shifted our berth and got nearer in to a place where whalers often lie for two or three weeks at a time; and all that night we were filling coal-bags ready to land. Of course our primary object in getting out heavy stores was that we might use them during our detention; but there was another secondary object. We thought that if the ship were very much lightened she might float over the bar next spring-tide, when, as the Frenchmen told us, there would be twelve feet of water on it. But, as will be seen, the fate of the ship was decided before the springs, although they occurred only a week after our arrival: for it blew very hard that Sunday night, and at daylight on the 19th we found that the ship was adrift and going rapidly on to the rocks. The fluke of our anchor (this, it will be remembered, was our third) was gone, so we kept under steam, recovering our ground every time we drifted, and despatching our boats with coal as we best might,

for the Frenchmen now told us that it was useless to attempt to anchor while the weather might continue so stormy. We had constructed a huge raft for transport of the stores, but this we did not use, as we found four boats on the island, which, with the ship's boats, gave plenty of conveyance. But the gale increased to such a degree that three of these boats were nearly lost on the rocks, and the ship got close to the shore, and was barely saved by going full speed astern. So we had to hoist up the boats that were outside near the ship, and to signal to those inside the bar to stay where they were. Then we were blown off with such force that, with all the power of our engines, we could scarcely keep near the land. Once we were carried so far away that those working on shore, forgetting that we had no provisions, thought we had deserted them.

We made our way in again, but it had now become evident that, with the gale increasing as it was, we could not keep afloat all night. Either we must strike on the rocks, or we must founder; for, alas! our leak was open again, and as bad as ever. And now again our unlucky Captain was called upon to come to a sudden decision, and again he showed himself quite equal to his duty. The next short lull, he said, he would run the ship on shore. So the holds and lower decks were cleared of everything that could possibly be got up, as it was expected that they would be full of water after she should take the ground. The time was chosen well. One of the Frenchmen acted as pilot; the Captain's cockswain took the helm; the Captain himself gave the orders; and, steaming full speed, with the wind abeam, she was driven with a great shock and noise right on to the centre of the bar, where she was stranded perfectly upright, and well

on to the ground. The engines were stopped just as she took the ground, but they worked again full speed to keep her up until the water rose inside her, and put the fires out. When they were powerless, we let go our last anchor to prevent her slipping off the bank; and there she stuck, never to plough the seas again. The *Megara* was a wreck.

As the ship's bottom grated against the ground of the bar, the frame which was most damaged, and which was near the leak, broke in half. The water bubbled through the fore part of the port-side of the stoke-hole, just about where the diver had seen the large rusty place. She bumped heavily at first as the rollers lifted her, but after the fires had been extinguished she lay perfectly still. A shore which was put over to keep her upright snapped immediately. There were 12 feet of water in her forward, 15 feet amidships, and 17 feet in the after-hold; indeed, she was full up to the troop-decks. But sad as this plight was, it was a most fortunate issue of the desperate measure which our Captain had been compelled to take. Many among us expected the very worst. Some thought that she might part amidships as she encountered the bank; others predicted that the waves would break over her funnel or her mast-heads as soon as she should be fast; and, impressed by these fears, they stood ready to take the water and swim for life. Nothing seems so bad but that an anxious imagination can make it worse, as everybody soon began to perceive. We left off making, or listening to, gloomy speculations, and went to dinner.

We soon learned from the Frenchmen that the wind rarely blows in from the sea except in December, January, and February, which intelligence was reassuring. It was possible thus to make use of the shelter

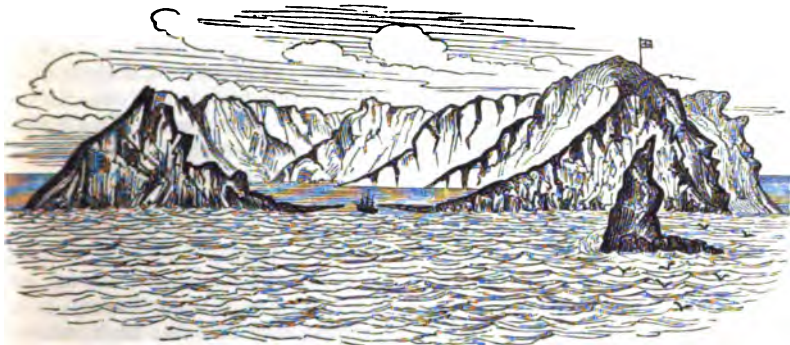
of the wreck until some sort of cover could be extemporised on shore; and indeed we did not wholly desert the old craft until the 29th of June. This was the way we managed to live on board of her. The Captain's cabin was under the poop, and therefore dry enough as long as the stern windows were unharmed. Under the cabin was the ward-room, a very commodious one, lit by stern-lights and by two circular ports. Through one or other of these ports an ingushing wave would sometimes make its way, when it was necessary to catch up the feet pretty high if one would avoid getting them wet. A capacious table ran athwart ships, large enough to entertain the gun-room as well as the ward-room mess, so this was the general saloon. Forward there was the topgallant fore-castle, affording a good shelter, and the main-deck below was still dry. Below that again was the troop-deck, which, as has been said, was full of water.

Looking from a boat in the offing towards the bar and signal station at this strangely-formed island which was to be our prison, and might be our grave, the view was something like what is shown in the sketch on the following page.

Now that the old ship was disposed of, we had three principal matters to attend to, and we set about them all without loss of time. The first was to unload the ship as far as possible; the second, to prepare the hutment on shore; and the third, to search the island for some natural water-supply; for though we hoped to land a condensing apparatus, and could of course manage to catch some rain-water, yet a spring or reservoir would be much better, and the charts had it that there was no water on the island.

The landing of the coals, clothing, cordage, &c., was proceeded with

most vigorously on the 20th. Everybody helped who had not some other special duty. The officers manned the four shore-boats that had been found, and hoisted out and landed their own gear.



The men had to be trusted with open boxes, containing many things which might sorely have tempted them; but nothing was missed—a circumstance which reflects the greatest credit on the crew. The sails were all saved, and most of the slops and bales. Some perishable articles were destroyed by wet, but a very great deal came out quite serviceable. To get at the coal, which we so much required, it was necessary to break up the main-deck, and then many of us, to whom that occupation fell, descended into the bunkers, amid the water black with coal, where we got shockingly begrimed with our work. We had to keep our dirt too, for not a drop of water could then be allowed except to drink. The condensing apparatus was all under water, and could not be got out; but three main-deck tanks were taken on shore, and one of them was stayed up and strengthened sufficiently to make it capable of doing the work of a boiler, and in four days our engineers had a condensing apparatus complete. We also filled as many casks and barricos as we could with fresh water. The magazine was under water, and the ship's ammunition could not be got

at all, except two cases containing forty-seven rounds of powder and two thousand rounds of ball-cartridge. When we had cleared away all that we could get at, there still remained many casks of oil, paint, lime, &c., low down in the water, and for the extrication of these the diver went to work with some success. All this took time to do, and was not achieved without severe exertion, which, however, all underwent, officers and men, cheerfully and persistently, with a solitary exception. An ordinary seaman, the day after we beached the ship, refused to work. Whereupon the Captain turned up the hands, had the offender seized up to a grating on board, and ordered him four dozen lashes, which brought the culprit to his senses, and deterred any other skulkers, if such there were, from objecting to take their share of the toil. From this little incident it will be understood that of the valuables saved a cat-o-nine-tails was one, and that our chief was not afraid to use it.

While some were employed landing provisions and stores, as above stated, others were preparing accommodation on shore. There were old

sheds and houses standing on the island, which we, of course, turned to account. Besides these, tents were our readiest resort; but no time was lost in running up some huts of dry masonry or turf. Some of these were lined with canvas or wood, and some roughly plastered and lime-whited. The roofs of the new buildings were all of canvas. Our settlement grew at a most satisfactory rate, and was not at all ill laid out. Even here the benefit of discipline and order was felt. There was no running up a cabin here or there, as the taste or caprice of an individual might dictate. Everything was done under authority, according to a previously-considered plan, which looked to future contingencies as well as to present needs. The Captain had accepted responsibility for beaching the ship and for landing her people, and he was by consequence charged with the maintenance of their lives and health as far as was possible. That he never for a moment lost sight of such responsibility, was abundantly evident from the minuteness with which all our doings were officially prescribed. With what judgment he exercised his authority will be better understood when we come to reckon up the number of dead he left behind, the casualties that occurred, and the general results of his administration. The hutment, then, was laid out with some care, and streets and roads were formed, as well as houses. The sites for the latter were carefully cleared and levelled as far as our means permitted. But we were, all through our sojourn, at a disadvantage from the paucity of picks and shovels, which, notwithstanding all that the blacksmiths could do to keep our small stock in repair, were always insufficient for our wants.

Where the piece has broken out of the crater's rim as above de-

scribed, the rim itself, from both extremities of the fracture, slopes downward to the sea, and at its lowest part is hid under water—this lowest part being the bar on which the *Megæra* lay stranded. As the rim rises out of the water right and left, it forms two horns, one rising north, the other south. The prow of the ship pointed nearly west, therefore the northern horn, or causeway along the rock, was to the right of a beholder on her deck looking forward. This horn, which we called the Esplanade, ran up, as you looked at it from the sea, to a towering cliff 860 feet high, where we established our signal station; but inside, viewed from the crater, it sloped away behind the hill, forming a terraced shelter, an indented strand, upon which stood, or was to stand, our town. High up at the signal station we established a small outpost for the look-out men; and perpendicular to the northern horn we ran out a landing-pier into the crater. The marines had a tent to themselves, the sailors had four; there was one for the hospital or sick bay, one for the petty officers, one for the stokers. The stewards had a tent, so had the servants, and there was one for the men's bags. Last, though not least, there was a cooking-tent or galley. As for the officers, they lived together in two's and three's in tents or huts, or in dwellings compounded of the two. The Captain established himself in an old shed where whale-oil had been boiled; and to give an idea of the order of architecture fashionable in St Paul's, I subjoin some of the details of construction of "Government House." In its original condition as a whale-house it was a most unsavoury place. It had no window, so the first steps in the transformation were to pull down one of its side-walls (a dry rubble wall, remember), and then to pull

up the pavement and cleanse the place thoroughly of its impurities and abominations. These were pretty well disposed of at last. Then they laid the floor anew in quicklime, raked the salt out of the walls, purified the whole edifice with carbolic acid, and finally rebuilt the wall which they had before taken down, only when the wall rose again, instead of being a "dead" one, it was lively with two superb windows. When the inside had been hung with canvas by way of tapestry, it formed an imposing hall, which was afterwards made to gain in comfort if it lost in grandeur, by being divided into three rooms by bulk-heads—dining-room, bed-room, and kitchen. The floors were made of ship's hatches, and the outside was whitewashed to a high degree of brightness. Inside was the cabin furniture: tables, chairs, bookshelves, and cot; mess-traps had been landed all sound; there was a toilet-table and a looking-glass: the settlement in its early infancy was becoming luxurious.

I do not know that the encampment generally needs a particular description; yet there is one little circumstance which it is right to mention, because it goes to prove that architecture in the island of St Paul is governed by considerations which do not present themselves in most places. The marines, it was stated, had a tent to themselves, or rather a tent and hut combined. After a little while it was found that the floor smoked, and that the paving-stones were so hot that none could touch them. It was the opinion of some of the more imaginative marines that their tabernacle stood over the ancient realm of Hades, from which it was separated by a thin crust. It seemed as if an extension of their motto, "*per mare, per terram*," might soon be proper. The fact was, as other evidence after-

wards convinced us, that we were doing literally what people are by a figure so often said to do—slumbering on a volcano!

From first to last we saved more than two-thirds of the ship's stores. We rescued 35 tons of coals. We got out furniture and utensils sufficient to save us from very great privations in those respects. By the 24th of June all had landed except the Captain, twelve other officers, and forty men who continued to live on board. The men took their bags and hammocks ashore with them. By 29th June the bilge-water on board had become very offensive; and as preparations on shore had advanced satisfactorily, the last of our party landed on that day, leaving the old ship to her fate. We did not cease to extract what stores we could from the wreck; but we had for ever parted from her as our habitation. How long could she bear the attacks of the winds and the seas without falling to pieces?

Before we abandoned the ship, a discovery of some small ponds of water, holding about 3 tuns each, on the heights over our encampment, was made. It was ascertained, moreover, that if these ponds were drained, as they often were, they would be filled again by a night's rain. So that in this respect also we were far more favoured than we had any right to expect. The charts said the island was without water, which was true as regarded wholesome springs; but as long as the rainy season should last, the catch from our roofs, and the contents of the ponds, would yield an ample supply. If it should be our fate to be detained there till the dry season, we had still our extemporised condensing apparatus, and all that we might store during the wet season to fall back on. We did not anticipate a sojourn on the island until the water should fail,

and so, having a certain stock of provisions, clothing, fresh water within reach, and a very fair shelter, we parted from the ship in good heart, being now interested in her only so far that we desired to get as much as we could out of her, and were curious to see how long, in her exposed and storm-beaten position, she could hold together. And now, before I begin to speak of life on the island, I will complete the history of the old *Megara*. On the night between the 9th and 10th of August, her starboard quarter-gallery was washed away by heavy rollers; but she still held herself upright on the bar with all her masts standing. On the 23d of August, when we had five weeks' experience of the island, being much in want of plank, we went off and sawed the mizzen-mast off flush with the poop. It came down with such a crash that it broke in half; but still the ship held her ground, her familiar form being a link between us and the world from which we were separated—a *souvenir* of our notable preservation from the perils of the deep.

Half an hour after midnight, on the morning of the 3d September, under the influence of the sea and the wind, both of which raged violently and with increasing strength, all our boats moored inside the crater were blown adrift. While we were securing them, a loud report was heard in the direction of the ship, and when the surf and rollers cleared away for a minute or two, it appeared that the old *Megara* had parted amidships. Soon after the mainmast fell; and the

part of the ship containing the engines and boilers broke up. Above the howling of the wind and the roaring of the surf could be heard the rending and cracking of her parting timbers and plates. The foremast with the fore-yard fell next. The bows then, moving in a direct line for the entrance of the crater, tumbled over, blocking up two-thirds of the entrance. The stern of the ship was afterwards driven ashore on the rocks between the encampment and the open. Such was the fury of the elements, that large pieces of the wreck, and boulders weighing half a ton each, were driven twenty feet above high-water mark. Our esplanade was destroyed, many of the low-lying tents and houses were flooded, two shore-boats were washed off the strand where they had been hauled up, and our new pier was lifted and displaced. This all happened within an hour; but the hurly-burly continued and waxed stronger and more fearful till 9 o'clock, when, as if to bring the horrid turmoil and din to a climax, a huge cliff fell at the entrance to the crater, 2000 tons of it at the first crash, and then 700 tons more. And thus perished, not an easy victim even to nature's fury, her Majesty's iron-screw-ship *Megara*, seventy-six days after she had been stranded. Before we lost her presence we knew that our deliverance was at hand; so that, as we witnessed her terrible dissolution, we were spared, thank God, the apprehension that in a little while our remains too might strew that desolate shore.

CHAPTER III.—LIFE IN ST PAUL'S.

As I have more than once mentioned the two Frenchmen whom we found living on the island, and as they two constituted the inhabi-

tants when we arrived, it will be proper to say a word about them, as a first essay at depicting life in St Paul's. These men were em-

ployed at a remuneration of 40 francs a-month (7s. 6d. English a-week) for living in this lively place, and looking after the four boats and the few sheds which I have mentioned as having been found, and also some few stores which we found afterwards. They looked out for whale-ships arriving, and got casks of fresh water filled during the rainy season so as to be ready for them. These men had in charge a register, in which each captain made notes concerning the island. They had also a decent library of French books; but this appeared to be a relic of an older time when there had been as many as fifteen men resident, who, with occasional help from crews of whalers, built the sheds and huts, which are used for boiling oil and salting fish when the vessels remain some little time off the island, as they sometimes do. There were, besides, other evidences that a little labour had at some time or other been bestowed on the place, for we found terraced gardens round the crater-sea facing the north,* to catch the warm sun. The gardens, however, had of late been sadly neglected. The only trees in the place were the cabbages which had shot up into shrubs.

Our two Frenchmen lived in a small wooden cabin, not liking the larger huts on account of the rats. They had come from the island of Reunion or Bourbon. One of them, styled "the governor," was thirty years of age, and lame. The other, the subject, was twenty-five years old. The governor had been on St Paul's off and on for eight years, going away occasionally for what sailors call a "burst up," or "spree." The other was a strong active young man, asplendid climber. He was of much use to us. The

governor described his subject as a very bad man: the subject spoke of the governor as a very good man. There was a tradition of a third person, a black man, having been on the island not so very long ago; but both the good and the bad man gave very unsatisfactory accounts of what became of him. Jack rather jumped at the conclusion that the governor and governed had killed and eaten him; and this idea seemed the more plausible when there was found to be one house, the door of which the Frenchmen would never let us keep open, as if the nigger had been immolated thereabout. Whether the two inhabitants felt any terror of blood-guiltiness, or whether, when they found some melodramatic imaginings rising in Jack's mind, they fostered the fancies according to the instincts of their race, I cannot determine. The nigger may have gone away in a whaler, or he may have gone quietly to earth, or he may have gone down the French gulleets. It is a very nice point in the early history of St Paul's, and possibly the future scholars of that island may rend each other's gowns, or fly at each other's throats, in their burning desire to put the matter rightly before a distant posterity. But let us leave the early settlers and the mythic period for a while, and record contemporary facts.

As soon as the first batch of us were housed on shore, Captain Thrupp issued a code of orders suited to our new circumstances, and, as draft after draft landed, the last comers fell readily into the routine of camp life. Instead of watches we had guards. Sanitary inspectors were appointed, and an executive staff to carry out their decrees. Exploring bands were told off. A signal station was established on the heights, 860 feet

* The reader will remember that we were in the southern hemisphere.

above the camp, and thither was at last carried or hauled up, with much exertion of force and of nautical skill, the spar which, on the 18th June (the day on which the Captain had decided to remain), a party of officers had, in their first outburst of zeal, raised to 500 feet high, and there left it on a ledge of the precipice. When this spar became a flagstaff, as it soon did, it displayed the British ensign upside down. For night-signals we had a beacon ready to kindle, blue-lights, and rockets, and there was always a gun ready loaded.

We had landed a very fair stock of provisions: the question was, how long it might be necessary to make these provisions last. There were 13,000 lb. of biscuit, about six weeks' full allowance of flour, salt meat, preserved meats, tea, rum, chocolate, and a very little sugar. Now five or six ships generally pass the island every month, and we calculated that in three months after we should have sent notice of our misfortune to Australia, we might hope for relief. The problem therefore was to make our provender last four months. Officers and men were put on $\frac{1}{3}$ allowance of bread, $\frac{2}{3}$ allowance of salt meat, $\frac{1}{2}$ allowance of sugar, $\frac{1}{4}$ allowance of tea. But this was not all that we depended on, for it was soon discovered that a large quantity of fish could be caught on most days. It also became known that there were flocks of wild goats on the island, and these we made occasionally help out our messes. The work was hard and the diet was not high, but yet we had a chance of getting on fairly, if only passing ships did not disappoint calculation.

Sea-fishing not only afforded us frequent sport but provided many a meal. Rocket-sticks, or split plank, made us rods for angling in the shallows; and we had plenty of lines,

though rather a limited supply of hooks, for foraging in the deep waters. One kind of large fish we called *salmon*, although its flesh is white and it eats more like mullet. There are red fish too, and a large sort of sardines, with golden bellies and greenish-grey backs. We named another kind *snappers*, besides which we had cray-fish, five fingers, snooks, and cabots. Learned books say that the sardines of the Indian Ocean are a deadly poison; if so we must have been poison-proof, for we ate plenty of them and were none the worse for it. We have caught as much as 700 lb. of fish in one day, and 120 to 180 lb. were not uncommon. Of the fish we called salmon, specimens were taken weighing over 60 lb. The cabot (a name which we got from the Frenchmen) is an ugly fish, with his lower jaw projecting beyond the upper; but, if not beautiful, he has the intrinsic merit of being very good for the table. This was the largest fish; one weighed 81 lb. after it was cleaned. So great draughts of fishes were, of course, not taken without considerable expenditure of gear, and we began to be embarrassed by the failure of our hooks. The smiths exerted their skill to remedy this defect; but the business was not exactly in their line, and they could hardly work fast enough for the constant demand. On the 1st August a cask containing near 3000 hooks was discovered in the cargo. Three thousand pounds of gold would have been valueless in comparison; these iron implements which could help us to get meat for the pot, these were the treasures for us, and we rejoiced extravagantly over the welcome steel.

There were on the island flocks of wild goats, altogether perhaps 100 in number. Of these we destroyed a few. The addition so made to our means of sustenance

was scarcely of importance, but the chasing and shooting at the animals gave us occupation and sport, and so had its value.

Our exploring parties did not find the island very rich in vegetable productions. Something like spinach was found, of which the Frenchmen taught us to make a salad. We tried some roots and some foxglove-leaves, and even took to cooking grass. But it was soon evident that we should benefit but little in the way of sustenance by anything we might find growing. There were ferns and tree-mosses, and some few interesting plants, but these unfortunately were not good to eat.

As may have been guessed, the men's clothing deteriorated rapidly from the hard work and constant exposure. Canvas leggings were ordered to be made for all hands very soon after our landing; and, one pair after another, all the legs on St Paul's were at length clad in these very comfortable and useful envelopes. After we had been two months ashore, new shoes were issued to the whole crew. We had some new sails with us which had been put on board for the Clio, Blanche, and Rosario. These were held sacred for a time, and we covered our tents and huts with what had belonged to the wreck. But the Megæra's canvas was so old and thin, that stern necessity compelled us at last to appropriate the "suits" of the other ships, which were thus allowed to wear out and get rotten.

There was plenty for all hands to do during the whole of our stay. We assembled in the morning and had prayers. Then there was building, road-making, fishing, shooting, exploring, and looking out for ships, to occupy the time. Once a-day the tents were all inspected by a medical officer. Sanitary parties came round and collected refuse, fish-bones, &c., which were afterwards put into a

boat, taken to deep water, and cast into the sea. Planks were furnished to spread the hammocks on at night, and the tents were supplied with dry leaves and fresh grass three times a-week. We got some quoits made, and we tried golf on the table-land at the top of the crater's rim, but without much effect. So well were we cared for, or so fortunate were we, that there were never more than five at a time in the sick-bay, and these were often laid up by accidental hurts rather than disease. We had one bad case of rheumatism, a man having been wet through one stormy night when his tent-cover could not keep out the weather; and we had an accident which might have proved fatal. About nine o'clock one night, towards the end of July, we were startled by seeing lights on the signal-hill, which we hailed to know what was the matter. The answer which came down through the fog was, "We have lost a marine, and think that he has fallen over the cliff." Immediately we lighted what lanterns we could lay our hands on, and volunteers started in search, two to each lantern, taking with them Bryant and May's matches. The doctor and lieutenants went up, but the Captain remained below to give orders in case the man should be found. At two o'clock they all returned unsuccessful. An hour before day—that is to say, about five o'clock—the parties started again; and by-and-by came shouts, "He is found, quite dead." Whereupon the first lieutenant shouted back, "Send his body down." He had been found on the narrowest possible ledge, on which he had been stopped in his fall by the merest accident. There were 300 feet of cliff above him, and 600 feet below, all perpendicular. The accident was a more shocking one than we had imagined, and the truth surpassed the report, except in

one particular—the man was not dead though he had had this terrible fall, and lain out all night. He was brought down in a cot. It was soon ascertained that he had no bone broken, though he was terribly bruised and scratched. For two days it seemed as if he would scarcely recover, but he rallied at last and got well. There were a few other bad falls. There was a good deal of distress from chilblains. And there were some not very bad cases of diarrhoea and dysentery. No doubt there would have been more sickness had not the utmost care been taken to make men change their clothes after getting wet.

Our first discovery in the way of native water was a hot sulphurised spring, from which it was not considered wholesome to drink. There was, however, near to it, a bed of clay that lathered like soap, and that was very useful. We soon, however, found the pools of rain-water before mentioned over the highest part of the island. They are about 400 yards from the summit, on the side farthest from the camp. Our first supplies from these sources were obtained by sending up parties with barricos, which, when filled, they brought all the way by hand; but we soon improved on this method, and established hose or tubing between the summit and the camp. It was then necessary only to carry the water in barricos from the ponds to the summit, and from the summit it came down through our aqueduct. So a party remained on the heights during the operation, which had now become a simple one. The pools held about three tuns; but they filled again after every rain, so that until a dry season should occur we

had plenty of water for our needs, after using what we got from the ship. But we were obliged, of course, to keep the prospect of this dry season always before us; and our only resource when it should arrive would be the condenser, and what we could contrive to store while the rain might last.* Now the condensing apparatus could make about 360 gallons of fresh water a-day with coal, and about half that quantity with turf and a little wood. Thus, as the coal made it far more productive than other fuel, it was necessary to husband all the coal that we had been able to save, so as to be prepared against the worst. So the cooks were not allowed coal at all, but had to burn dry grass, or to collect pieces of wreck. Baking, therefore, was out of the question.

At first, before we knew the extent of our resources, fresh water was allowed for drinking and cooking only; and for a week we remained in a deplorable state of dirt. Extraordinary devices were resorted to, by those who still cared for appearance, to hide dirty shirts; and as for our skins, it is better not to talk about them. But when we began to have a store of casks and found that our ponds were replenished almost as fast as we emptied them, things were not pushed quite so close. The luxury of a first *tub* after that long privation is not a thing to describe; only they who experienced it can understand it. And another consequence of the improved water supply was, that one of the cooks made an attempt at brewing, and his beer attracted considerable custom. It should be added that we found a number of hot springs between high and low water marks; and by digging a little above the high-water line we found

* Before we left we had cut other ponds large enough to hold ten tuns, and we had stored a great deal in casks.

a fine one whose temperature was 175° Fahrenheit, the stones near it being quite hot. This we fenced in, so that we had always plenty of hot water for washing ready to our hands, and no precious coal expended in heating it.

Spite of our signals and endeavours, we did not, as I shall show, communicate with any ship for a month after our arrival. It was therefore thought necessary further to reduce the allowance of food; and from 9th July to 13th August we had but four ounces of bread and half a pound of salt meat; but on the latter date, as our prospects had begun to improve, we returned to the original rate. On and after 27th August we were on full allowance, being assured of relief. The rice which we found on the island was left there for the use of the Frenchmen, being their only provision of food. After our arrival the Governor and his subject were rationed by us the same as our own people, which was not a restricted diet for them, whatever we may have thought of it.

After the ship broke up, we got some of the cases of powder which were washed on shore, and which ought to have been found wind and water tight, and with dry powder inside. It was all, however, very wet; but bad as it was we collected it, and made two small magazines in the rocks for its reception, expecting that we should require it, if for no other purpose, for removing the part of the wreck which lay on the bar. The necessity for a blast did not, however, arise.

It will scarcely be supposed, when times were so bad for the ship, that the boats had at all a pleasant season of it. They were swamped more than once, and, but for very careful handling, must have been capsized in one or other of the many squalls and gales that we had to put out in.

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Our cutter went away in tow of a Dutch barque, having gone out to her, and being unable to return; and the lifeboat, which went out to rescue the cutter's crew, stove in her port gunwale, and got back with the utmost difficulty. She could not have floated ten minutes longer.

Some of us took to gardening, and tried to grow vegetables from seed which we had among the ship's provisions. There were daring attempts at raising onions and potatoes, and the celery-seed which we brought for our pea-soup went into the ground for the chance of our having a crop of celery. Mushroom, or something very like them, we found on the island, and ventured to eat. They did not agree with everybody.

During our stay the island was visited by penguins, which come every year about that season to lay their eggs on the tufts of grass among the rocks. They are beautiful birds, with white breasts, grey backs, pink eyes, and long golden feathers on their heads. It was at first thought that they might be good for food, and somebody stated that, if buried in the earth for forty-eight hours after they were killed, they make a tolerable dish. I believe some tried them according to the recipe; but, hungry as we were, nobody wanted to try them a second time. Had they been eatable, we should no doubt have treated them with small ceremony; but as there was no reasonable object to be gained by killing them, they were taken under official protection, and their destruction forbidden. It was proper to make a decree on their behalf, because they are of a sociable and confiding nature, and might have suffered much from thoughtless attacks if left to the mercy of the men. As they came waddling and sometimes tumbling along, like people jumping in sacks, they would

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quietly pull up to stare at us, and let us stroke them on the back, calling up Cowper's lines—

“They are so unacquainted with man,
Their tameness is shocking to me.”

They are to be seen by hundreds at a time, and their queer doings well repay the trouble of watching them. When they are landing in the surf, they look out for a big wave and dive into it. It carries them along till they reach a rock, when they come to anchor for a while, and turn and look round for another big strong wave, again diving into which they are washed along another stage, and so at last on to the rocks on shore, where they collect in groups, and hold council as to the method of climbing the hill. The sailors got to be on such good terms with them, that they showed them the best way,—that is, our new road—up the mountain. One day six of these birds landed and marched up the middle of our camp, followed by at least fifty men, whose propinquity did not discompose them in the least, nor seem to be noticed by them. They made straight for the Captain's house, which, having been formerly an oil-shed, they had probably made a house of call on former visits. On this occasion, however, they found their way barred by a sentry, whereupon they held a council outside with the utmost *sang-froid*, looking coolly round at the spectators, and only interrupting the proceedings to peck at any man who might go too near them. It seemed to have been resolved at this council to effect by stratagem what could not be done directly, and accordingly some of them attempted to attract the attention of the sentry to one side, while others stood ready to slip in. But as the *ruse* was penetrated and baffled by the acute sentinel, they bore the disappointment with the calmness of philosophers, and tum-

bled quietly and slowly on their upward way. The Frenchmen said that they lay their eggs on the grass by the 1st September, and that the said eggs are very good to eat.

From our first arrival, divine service on Sundays was regularly and solemnly performed. While any of us remained on board the wreck, there was service both on board and on shore when the sea was too rough to allow the whole to assemble in one place. The thanksgivings and hymns of praise were repeatedly read and devoutly joined in, and for a lesson after our landing the men listened to the account of St Paul's shipwreck with great attention. St Paul's ship, like our own, had been run on shore, and great as had been the perils with which those ancient voyagers were encompassed, not one of them perished. We ourselves found that God had not forgotten to be gracious, and the incidents of the lesson filled us—filled all of us, I hope—not only with gratitude for past mercies, but with a lively trust for the future. I cannot but believe that every man who at our simple open-air service stood uncovered before his Maker, was impressed by the conviction that he had been a special object of divine favour. I think, too, that the impression will be lasting.

I cannot close this account of our life on the island without mentioning that, from the first, we all, officers and men, did what we could to keep our spirits up, and to make the time pass as pleasantly as circumstances would permit. Besides their daily avocations, which have been mentioned, the officers played whist and backgammon; the men had quoits, and Jack's great inspirer, a fiddler. On the evening of the day after the ship was beached, when every one had been working hard, and it was impossible to read, and not good to think too much, the

Captain had a whist-party—a most sensible arrangement ; and afterwards we generally managed to pass the time agreeably with some kind of game, or in a smoking-party, the Captain always joining some of the officers after the day's work was done. As we got settled, we began to have somewhat grand ideas, and got up entertainments. On one occasion the first-lieutenant feasted all the warrant-officers, and there was great singing of songs and general hilarity. The fiddler happened to be seated near a box of mixed biscuits, which temptation was too much for the hungry musician, who would surreptitiously dash his hand into the coveted cakes, cram his mouth full of them, and then fiddle away furiously, to make people believe that he had no thought but of his music. The little trick was several times repeated to the amusement of many ; but the fiddler himself seemed quite satisfied that he had the joke all to himself. Neither was he the only person who congratulated himself that night. The boatswain, in the fulness of his heart, rose to address the company. "Gentlemen," said he, solemnly,— "gentlemen, I assure you that this evening, for the first time, the waistband of my trousers is *quite tight*.

I have been starving almost, but not now, gentlemen—not now, thank God."

There are plenty of scenes and jests which all of us will think about, and probably talk about, around mess-tables and over sea-coal fires. But with all the merriment we could put on, very ugly thoughts would present themselves now and then during the weary weeks that we remained at St Paul's without communicating with a ship. Our provisions, scantily as we consumed them, could last only a moderate time ; the island produced nothing for our subsistence ; and so, if we were left much longer to ourselves, there might be horrors in store for us such as we read of in tales of shipwrecks, and of disabled vessels wandering on the trackless seas. They may be very exciting to read about, but, as I am a man, it is not exhilarating to imagine that before many days are over your head, you may be an actor in such scenes !

We had among us no less than nine men who had suffered shipwreck before—in the *Orpheus*, *Osprey*, *Bombay*, *Captain*, *Trinculo*, *Perseverance*, *Race-horse* ; one of them—an old cook—had been five times wrecked in three years.

CHAPTER IV.—THE RESCUE.

It has been told how, on first landing, we set up a boom for a signal-staff on the mountain, and how we got ready night-signals to attract the attention of passing vessels. On the night of the 23d June a red light was seen, and we fired guns and rockets, but without being observed. A vessel was perceived on the morning of the 24th, but too far off to be communicated with. Later in the day, however, another sail was seen far away. The life-

boat was signalled to be ready to put off to her in case this ship should come in ; but the boat, mistaking the order, pulled after the distant vessel, and made desperate attempts to reach her. We saw from the shore that this was impossible, and made signals to the lifeboat (as we feared she would be benighted) to come back.

It was an hour after dark when she got into the crater. The officer reported that he had got very near the ship, but had not been perceived.

They had shipped seas that would have swamped any boat but a lifeboat, and they were all wet through. Thus ended our first attempt to make our condition known. Lieut. Lewis Jones had orders to keep his portmanteau ready packed, and to board the first ship that he could reach. If he could not bring her in to take us away, he could, at any rate, go himself and take letters; and if he should be lucky enough to reach a port, he could tell of our plight. But fearing that it might be some time before he could get away, we rigged up some seamessengers, made of barricos, with accounts of our situation inside, and sent them to sea. Two of these were attached to life-buoys. We also put accounts into bottles, weighted the bottles so that they would float upright, stuck a tin flag into each with the words "open me" punched through the flags, and committed them also to the deep. It was tedious work. We saw and chased a ship or two, but up to the 16th July—that is, a month after our arrival—not one had noticed us. On that day, however, our fortune changed. A Dutch barque, bound for Java, and in ballast, had seen our signal and come in.* Lieutenant Jones, in the lifeboat, boarded her according to his orders, and got away with a few returns in his mail-bag. Despatches and private letters were unfortunately not to be found when he put off, and the writers of them were dispersed about the island, and did not get to camp until the opportunity had passed, although they came back at the top of their speed when they heard the gun fire. We thought, however, that the letters would yet be sent, as we

fully expected the ship back. The boat brought back word that the barque could take twenty men with the water and provisions which she had on board; but we thought that, with the additional water and stores which we might give her, she might take the whole of us. Accordingly, as we expected her in again next day, we kept our condenser going all night, that the requisite quantity of water might be forthcoming, and got the despatches and letters ready *this time*. But she did not appear the next day, nor the day after that. Our whole community was overcome with chagrin, and could not recover from the mortification. The only consolation was, that Lieutenant Jones had got off and would report us. Sub-lieutenant Roxby was told off to board the next ship.

Our hopes were raised again on 23d July, but only to be disappointed. A ship passed, but a long way off. The lifeboat put off, and had proceeded but a short way beyond the bar when she was recalled, as the chase was hopeless. The only result of her start was, that some of the mail-bags got wet. There was a similar disappointment, and the mail-bags got wet again, on 28th July.

On 5th August a Dutch barque, bound for Sumatra, came in. She took Mr Roxby, two other officers, and two seamen, besides a midshipman who, having boarded her from the cutter, was carried away with only the clothes he stood in. This was the occasion on which our cutter was taken away in tow of the barque; and the lifeboat, coming out to rescue the cutter's crew, had her port air-box stove in. The cutter took off water to the ship, and

* The captain saw our flagstaff and thought it was a tree: but as he had some previous acquaintance with the island, and knew that it did not possess a tree, he came in to satisfy himself about it.

the lifeboat brought us flour in exchange; but the weather was so bad that no farther communication could be effected.

On Monday, 7th August, came in an English clipper-ship bound for Java. The captain would have taken us all to Australia upon exorbitant terms — viz., payment of £3000 and purchase of her cargo of coal at £4, 10s. a ton, that we might throw 200 tons overboard to make room for us. As there was every reason to hope that we were in a fair way of being relieved, Captain Thrupp did not think proper to accede to this demand, and let the *Mountain Laurel*—that was her name—go on her way.

The next ship that visited us was the *Oberon* steamer, and she arrived on 26th August. Lieutenant Sanders boarded her in the lifeboat, and Lieutenant Evans in the Captain's galley. Just as the latter came alongside he fell overboard, and was gallantly saved by the cockswain of the lifeboat. Almost immediately the galley was seen returning to shore. We crowded to the beach to receive her, and hear what news she brought. But before we had time to hear anything, we saw a sight which told us more than a long story, and which extracted such cheering as it was marvellous to account for, coming as it did through throats that swallowed but half a pound of beef per diem. The cheers did however come, and were repeated and prolonged as if the enthusiasm would never end. The cause of them was that, seated in the stern of the galley, and steering her in, was seen Lieutenant Lewis Jones, who had gone away from us in the Dutch barque on 16th July. He had reached Batavia, and had come back in the *Oberon*, auxiliary screw-steamer, bringing with him provisions for us, and bringing, too, the news that the steamer *Malacca*

left Hong Kong on 7th August for St Paul's, with orders to take us to Sydney. As soon as we had welcomed Lieutenant Jones, we began to prepare for departure. We had held a survey of the stores; and our pier, sheers, &c. being now complete, we hoped for fine weather and a successful embarkation. The supplies brought by the *Oberon* took away all cause for short commons, and to our delight we were at once on full allowance; and it is to be hoped that the boatswain's and many other waistbands soon grew a good deal tighter. The *Oberon* left for England on the 27th.

Lieutenant Jones reported most favourably of the kindness and liberality of the captain of the Dutch barque *Aurora*. The latter refused to receive any passage-money from the Vice-Consul or from Lieutenant Jones, and only regretted that he had been able to render so little assistance.

Before the *Malacca* could arrive, came in by moonlight on 29th August H.M.S. *Rinaldo*, with orders for Captain Thrupp to proceed to England to face the inevitable court-martial. Next morning came in the *Malacca*, by which time it was beginning to blow hard. By noon both ships were standing out to sea, *Rinaldo* having lost two anchors, and *Malacca* one. Very like our luck, barring the leak. At evening they were both out of sight.

On 31st, the ships not being seen all day, Captain Thrupp made last arrangements, decided who should go to England and who to Sydney, and we settled all money transactions. *Malacca* was just seen at sunset and then vanished again, but on 1st September, which was a lovely day, she came in, dropped her anchor, and embarked 264 officers and men, with all their baggage. It was as smooth as oil while this was being done, but by the morning of the 2d

it was blowing again. Malacca was informed that the anchorage was unsafe, and requested to weigh but to keep near, and come in again when weather might permit. But she held on, and at 9.30 parted her anchor and ran to sea, while it blew very hard indeed. It was a fearful night. It was the night, indeed, when, amid the war of the elements and a wrack as if heaven and earth would mingle, the old *Megara* parted and broke up, as has been already described. Both ships were in again on the 5th, the *Rinaldo* under sail with no coal left. Her captain urged Captain Thrupp to embark at once; but that officer was far too sensible of what it behoved him to do to listen to such a suggestion. On the other hand, it was positively dangerous for *Rinaldo* to stay; yet she did wait, sailing about, tossed by the heavy sea some miles from the island, until all were embarked, Captain Thrupp appointing King George's Sound the rendezvous. Boats from camp got off to Malacca, but could not leave her again until they had been towed well up to windward, to enable them to pull back for more people from the island. The weather was beyond all conception bad. And now the captain of the *Malacca* too declared that he could wait no longer, and that Captain Thrupp must come on board at once. It cost the latter officer a pang, no doubt, to leave his stores, but the man who had decided so promptly and so judiciously on former trying occasions was not at fault now. He left the Frenchmen in charge of the stores, promising them remuneration if they acquitted themselves honourably, and hoping that when the stormy season should be over, a steamer might fetch the stores away at leisure. He then, after seeing every man who had been under his charge embark, left the island himself, and got on board in safety. By

this time Malacca had lost two anchors, one lifeboat, two cutters, and two chain-plates—pretty broad hints that it was time for her to be off.

Malacca reached King George's Sound in safety, whence the main body of the *Megara's* crew proceeded to Sydney. *Rinaldo* arrived there on 16th September, but the mail-steamer took Captain Thrupp, and those who were to accompany him, to England. This was done to save time, as the *Rinaldo* would not have been coaled and provisioned for a week; whereas the mail-steamer was going direct to Galle at once.

So we were all saved. Thanks, in the first place, to the Providence that watched over us, and brought us through so many dangers! but thanks also to the instrument, our Captain, who, after so many misfortunes, could give a good account of us all. It may seem very straightforward work when it is read of after the events; but let any man think what would have been the effect of a failure of nerve, or of an error in judgment, at any of the critical predicaments which I have recorded. My object in writing this account was not to laud any one in particular, but to show what great things God has done for us all, as I said before. And yet I think that every one of our party, when he feels himself alive and hearty, when his wife's arms are round his neck, and his little ones are about his knees, will scarcely be convinced but that he owes his wellbeing, in some degree, to Captain Thrupp.

"Beseech you, sir, be merry; you have
cause

(So have we all) of joy; for our escape
Is much beyond our loss: our hint of woe
Is common; every day some sailor's wife,
The masters of some merchant, and the
merchant,

Have just our theme of woe; but for the
miracle,

I mean our preservation, few in millions
Can speak like us."

APPENDIX.

S.S. MALACCA, OFF ST PAUL'S,
Sept. 5, 1871.

MY DEAR CAPTAIN THRUPP,—Last night Lieut. Præd told me you were still desirous of sending the stores on board. I also was of the same opinion, and almost urged it in our interview on shore, if the weather would permit of it; but having already lost two anchors, and experienced such disastrous weather since we have been here, I should deem it a great favour if you would abandon the idea, as, in the event of my anchoring and losing the stream anchor, I should only have one anchor to depend on at other ports; and also our engines having been constantly at work for the last five weeks, without an opportunity occurring to enable the engineers to examine them, the probability is, in the event of our having to move them at a moment's notice, they might not readily start, in which case the ship would be placed in *imminent peril*; and, to further enumerate our mishaps, we have lost one lifeboat, two cutters, and two channel-plates of main rigging. I therefore consider I run a *great risk* in anchoring, as the weather cannot be depended on for any length of time, and shall feel greatly obliged if you will enter into my views on the subject; so pray embark as soon as the bar will admit of it, for I am *very anxious* to have you all safe on board. Lieut. Præd will explain to you more concisely how we are situated.

I remain, in haste, my dear Captain Thrupp, yours sincerely,

S. BERNARD.

P. & O. COY. S.S. MALACCA, AT SEA,
Wednesday, Sept. 6, 1871.

SIR,—In compliance with your order, I subjoin an account of the chief events that took place on board the ship between Friday, Sept. 1st, and Tuesday, Sept. 5th, inclusive. On Friday 1st, commenced embarking the officers, men, and their baggage of the late H.M.S. Megæra on board the P. & O. Company S.S. Malacca: by dusk 264 men and officers were embarked; blowing fresh from the north; parties of men were employed during the day in stowing baggage and shifting coal

to make room for the late Megæra's cargo: during the night the wind increased. Saturday, Sept. 2d, 7.30 A.M.—A boat boarded us from the shore with a message from Captain Thrupp, recommending Captain Bernard to weigh and proceed to sea till the wind should abate: 9.30 A.M.—The cable parted, steam having been kept ready for this emergency. We immediately proceeded to get clear of the land, the ship rolling heavily, and shipping a great deal of water fore and aft. The small amount of baggage on deck was with some difficulty secured—not, however before the following accidents had occurred. James Eades, boatswain's mate, a wound in the thigh; Arthur Essery, armourer's crew, contusion of the leg and sprained ankle; James Rice, leading seaman, severe scalp-wounds; William Wilcox, A.B., contusion of the back; William Pidgeon, A.B. wound in the leg; Henry Peek, A.B., contusion of the right shoulder; Pat. Cunningham, A.B., wounded in the leg. The ship rolled so heavily, and shipped so much water when off the wind, that it was thought advisable to keep her head to wind. By noon it was blowing a gale, with a tremendous sea running; the ship labouring very heavily, and shipping green seas forward, all hatches battened down. 10 P.M., a heavy sea struck the starboard lifeboat and smashed her against the davits; she had to be cut away, in doing which she stove the cutter astern of her. Sunday, September 3d. During the night the wind shifted from W.N.W. to W.S.W. The ship being still kept head to wind; it still blowing hard, and a heavy sea running, the following damage was done during the night; the port bulwarks forward were washed away, two chain-plates, the starboard side of the main chains carried away, the jolly-boat astern stove, and a great proportion of the remaining live-stock killed. 7 A.M.—The port cutter was completely smashed beyond repair by a heavy sea; we were now left with only one boat fit for carrying cargo, and that of a light description—namely, the starboard lifeboat. 11.30 A.M.—Wore ship and kept away for the island of St Paul's, which was reckoned to bear S.E. 40 miles. Several heavy seas struck the ship aft, doing some damage—one

smashing in the saloon skylight, flooding the cabins on either side of it, doing considerable damage to officers' clothing. 0.15 P.M., sighted the island of St Paul's; 3.10 P.M., eased and stopped off the island, there being too much sea to communicate; stood off and on the island repairing damages. Monday, September 4.—The sea on the bar having gone down at 2 P.M., we sent a boat to communicate with shore, standing on and off the island, with a heavy sea running, and blowing fresh from the north. Tuesday, September 5.—The wind and sea having gone down, we commenced getting the rest of the men and officers from the shore. Captain Bernard considered it unadvisable to anchor, having only one anchor left. As the day advanced the wind freshened from the north, from which some trouble was experienced, every

boat having to be received down to leeward, cleared, and then towed up to windward to enable them to fetch into the crater. At 3 P.M. the pinnace came off from shore loaded with baggage and men; when cleared it was cut adrift according to order. During the day the wind increased, and there seemed every prospect of it being a dirty night. 3.30 P.M.—We attempted to hoist the late Megara's cutter up to the port davits; unfortunately both bolts drew through the bottom of the boat, one man falling into the water, and the others narrowly escaped being hurt. We did not make another attempt to hoist her up. At 4.15 P.M. the Captain and First Lieutenant came off in the late Megara's lifeboat, which was hoisted up at the starboard davits.

I have the honour to be, &c.,

F. PRÆD, *Lieutenant.*

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VOL. CXI.

FRENCH HOME LIFE.

NO. IV.—FOOD.

PASSENGERS at sea generally eat five times a-day, partly because the air makes them hungry, partly because they have nothing else to do. On shore we are less voracious and more occupied, but still we can scarcely get along agreeably without three meals. Some of us pretend that it is humiliating to be thus afflicted by purely animal needs; others, on the contrary, are of opinion that, as feeding is a delectable operation, we ought to be very thankful that we can perform it so frequently; a third class thinks nothing about it either way; while doctors, economists, and historians regard eating as a grave question, as one of the keys to health, and as a serious element in the progress of civilisation. And there is another point of view—more interesting still. We meet to eat; our repasts are made in company; they bring families and friends together; they exercise a unifying effect of enormous force. From Homer downwards, poets have sung

the charms of what they call “the festive board;” they have praised its softening action, its power of stimulating good temper, cheeriness, and gaiety; of dispelling anger, sadness, and discontent. The poets are right; nothing has ever been invented which soothes like dinner: and, without going so far as to suggest that it is a great moral cause, it may at all events be said with truth, that it stands in the front rank amongst the material influences for good which are at our disposal. Of the daily functions of home life it is indisputably the highest; no other social act can be compared to it in character, in importance, or in result. All the races of mankind feel this; even savages may be temporarily tamed by the sweet spell of mutual dinner; and as we rise in the scale of education the manifestation of its power grows clearer and clearer, until we reach the pinnacle of its development in certain European homes.

In no country are the higher uses

of eating more thoroughly appreciated or more seriously pursued than in France. The eminently social nature of its people, their singular skill in the preparation of food, the power which they so generally possess of extracting pleasurable satisfaction from the most ordinary acts, combine to enable them to lift up dinner to a level which is rarely reached elsewhere. Of course there are sufficiently abundant exceptions in other lands to show that intelligent dining is not really a monopoly of the French; but they alone realise it as a national fact; they alone, as a whole people, get out of the act of eating all that it can give. This superiority is not solely due to their culinary ability; the perfection of their dining is not an exclusive consequence of scientific cooking: the cook's work is but one of the two secrets of success; the other lies in the temper of the diners, and in their keen perception of the character of the operation which they are performing. There is evidence of the truth of this in almost every decent house in France; dinner is regarded as the principal event of family existence, as a moment of moral expansion rather than as a process of simple nourishment; for, excellent as the feeding ordinarily is, it alone would not raise meals to the importance which they assume amongst our neighbours. The people come to them not only to eat but to laugh, to charm the heart as well as to soothe the stomach. The consequence is that, as a rule, great cookery is neither used nor needed in daily home life. The ablest professors of the delicate art of arranging food, the profoundest *chef*, the most skilful *cordons bleus*, can contribute, after all, but little more than their less learned colleagues to the real object of everyday dinner: it is only on special occasions, at great festivals, that their capacities find

room for exhibition. Ordinary life does not require, and cannot utilise, transcendent ability in the kitchen—it wants lightness and brightness and laughter; and it is because they unite those merits to true home cookery that French families know how to dine.

Still, however true all this may be, however much the national temperament may contribute to the effect attained, the nature and execution of the dishes form the essential basis of a dinner in France just as they do elsewhere. Bad feeding destroys gaiety; good cookery is consequently called for quite as much for the sake of the moral influence it exercises as for the pleasure which it offers to the tongue. But when we look indoors across the Channel, we find that the phrase "good cookery" has a special meaning. It signifies something more than cunning variety, skilful handling, and pretty serving up. The deepest sense of the two words lies in the possession by every *plat* of the particular taste which is proper to it. To persons who have never directed their attention to this subtle point, or who have had no opportunity of studying it, such a definition may seem either meaningless or incomplete, according to the bent of their individual impressions on the subject; but, from the French point of view, it sets forth one of the great laws of cooking. To put the case quite clearly, it is essential to recall the fact that wealth is the exception in France, that poverty is the rule; that prudent thrift is generally practised, even when it is not imposed by irresistible necessity; and that economy of house-keeping consequently stands first amongst domestic duties. Now, economy means privation, to some extent at all events; but though the French generally live very cheaply—though, with few exceptions, their outlay is within their incomes

—though they do without what they think they ought not to pay for, they do not suffer as others would from this want of money, because they possess the priceless faculty of making the best of what they have. This capacity extends to almost every detail of home organisation, but it comes out with conspicuous distinctness in their management of food. The eating in middle-class French houses, inexpensive as it is, is certainly far superior to that of the majority of the richer classes in other countries. It consists of fewer dishes, of smaller quantities—it is composed of low-priced articles—its habitual range is limited; but the execution of each dish is perfect in itself, and the variety of the forms of preparation makes up for the relative absence of variety in the substances employed. The French are too poor and too wise to waste money in the purchase of fish, flesh, or fowl, when any of them cost more than their regular current value. These extravagances are left to people who are really wealthy, and to the faster elements of society in Paris and a few other towns. The nation never perpetrates them. But the nation, poor and saving as it is, requires that each dish shall be itself, with its full aroma, its full essence, its own character. It knows, by long experience, that poverty does not prevent the exercise of skill: it sets the latter off against the former—it replaces money by intelligence.

The first step towards the end in view is to so employ the sum allotted for the kitchen that it shall produce its utmost value, not only in quantity and quality, but, what is even more important, in suitability. Going to market does not simply mean clever buying; it involves the far higher talent of adapting the choice of the provisions bought to the use which it is proposed to make of

them. The law—so absolute is the habit that it may be called a law—which limits each day's purchases of food to what can be consumed in twenty-four hours, imposes the condition that everything shall be in small quantities; that is the basis of the entire question. Next comes the fitness of each object for the form of cookery to which it is to be subjected. No Frenchwoman, be she cook or mistress, would dream of buying the same chicken for a *fricassée* as she would select if she meant to roast it; the same vegetables for a soup or to serve alone; the same meat for stewing and for a *rôti*. She would always choose an inferior and cheaper article in one case than in the other, knowing that it is useless to spend money in good looks when she has a sauce to depend upon which will cover ugliness. The difference of expense resulting from the application of this principle may certainly be averaged at a tenth, but the additional economy which is produced by the exclusive use of little quantities is considerably more important. Here, however, the effect is complex: it is not limited to the direct diminution of waste in the ordinary sense of that word; it extends in two or three directions, and brings about various consequences which remain invisible until they are closely looked for. Those consequences, however, form one of the great elements of the subject, and it is well worth while to bring them clearly into light.

First of all, less fuel is required to cook a small dish than a large one. French kitchen-ranges do not resemble those which are still so generally in use in England, where the same vast mass of coal goes on blazing itself away, whether its heat be employed to boil a kettle or to roast a sheep. In France, especially in the country, cookery is carried on

with wood or charcoal fires, kept down to a low smoulder when not needed for the moment, and roused up to activity in five minutes when the time comes to use them. The same exact adaptation of means to the end, the same diligent pursuit of small economies, is discovered here as in all other details of the subject: a fire to roast a chicken is made just big enough to serve the purpose; the combustion of a pennyworth of charcoal boils or stews the contents of two saucepans at the same time; directly the operation is complete the fire is covered up with ashes, or is put right out. Small quantities do not take so long to cook as big ones do, so they need heat for a shorter period; and even in the case of soups, and of the few other dishes which require hours of gentle simmering to bring them to the point, the very nature of the process prohibits strong flame and accompanying loss of fuel. "*Cuisez doucement*" is the first counsel given to a beginner; and that means, amongst other things, never have a bigger or a hotter fire than you really want; for if you do, you will waste money, and will burn your *casseroles* and their contents.

The next consequence of the French system is that everything is eaten up. As there is only just enough, nobody has a chance of leaving anything; waste is suppressed because it cannot exist without a surplus, because its very possibility depends on an excess of supply over consumption. A very short experience will show a cook how much total weight of food she has to serve each day; and, the measure once acquired, she invariably acts upon it, and provides just that much and no more. The whole house knows that it will never be offered more than it can use; and that if the dinner of to-day should

seem to go beyond immediate wants, it is solely because to-morrow's breakfast is included in the estimate.

But the great source of economy lies in the diminished use of the dearer articles, and in the correspondingly increased employment of the cheaper ones. If a great piece of meat, costing twelvapence a-pound, is placed at the disposal of a hungry family, it will naturally be eaten at until everybody is content; but if a far smaller joint, which only partially satisfies their appetites, is put before them, with a supplementary allowance of soup, bread, and vegetables, representing, at the outside, an average price of threepence a-pound, it follows that the latter elements of the dinner will be consumed in large proportions, and that the total cost will be diminished in the exact ratio in which three is substituted for twelve. This example is, however, far too simple; it expresses the arithmetic of the case, but it gives no idea at all, either of its infinitely-varied applications, or of the ease with which such substitutions are carried out in France without any lessening of the attractive qualities of dinner. But as, for the moment, we are considering only the money side of the matter, such an illustration is sufficient, because it shows distinctly how the adoption of small dishes of each sort of food enables French housekeepers to economise on the dearer articles.

It is scarcely possible to form any reliable calculation of the total comparative saving which is brought about by the union of these three consequences of buying in little quantities—that is to say, of lessened fuel, suppression of waste, and the setting off of cheap food against higher-priced articles. At a guess, however, it may be put at about a third; which means that, under the

French system—supposing prices to be exactly equal in both cases—a sovereign will go as far as thirty shillings would in England. This is the material result of kitchen management in France, and no one will deny its grave importance. But when we come to see that this vast economy of expense is accompanied by extraordinary superiority in the nature of the food itself, we ought to regard our own food arrangements with stupefaction, and to ask ourselves when we are going to have sense enough to profit by the example set us across the Channel.

In England, taking the people as a whole, and excluding the special cases, there are but three known national ways of dressing food, roasting, boiling, and that inconceivable horror known as “hash.” Roasting is not badly done by us, and we fry soles fairly; but there end our faculties: what we call “boiling” is one of the most senseless acts to which human intelligence can descend; it is an inexcusable, unjustifiable, wanton folly. To people who have been “boiling” all their lives, these adjectives may seem strong; but have they ever really asked themselves what this boiling means? Have they ever reflected for one instant over the operation they are performing? To boil food, be it meat or be it vegetable, is to extract from it, first, its volatile aroma, then its essences and juices, and, finally, its power of nutrition; aroma, essence, juice, and strength, go out into the hot water, leaving behind them the fibre which they have quitted. Now in France this process is called making soup; the water becomes excellent, but the materials which have imparted their nature to it are considered, with some few exceptions, to have lost all claim to be considered as real food, and are only used as inferior

aliments. So thoroughly is this principle applied, that even the water in which white haricots or cauliflowers have been boiled, is always kept to serve as a basis for vegetable soups. Every liquid which has received the extracted flavour of a boiled substance, is looked upon as precious, and is employed again in some special form, so as not to waste the properties which it has acquired. In England, on the contrary, when we have carefully abstracted from turkey, or from beef, from chicken, ham, legs of mutton, green peas or beans, all that steady red-hot boiling can take out of them, we eat the tasteless, azoteless relics of our work, and we diligently throw away the “dirty water” which contains all the nutrition that we have distilled. This may be worthy of a great nation, but it is not easy to see how. Scotland, at all events, uses mutton-broth, but no right-minded Englishman will condescend to swallow any such “stuff,” or if he does, he calls it “hot water stirred with a tallow candle.” If ever prejudice and ignorance were thorough synonyms (as they almost always are), it is surely in their application to British cooking.

Now, look at France and see what is done by the people who, according to our lofty convictions, live contemptibly on “kickshaws.” Their dogma is, that everything which is in food ought to be left in it by the cook and to be found in it by the eater. The entire theory of French cooking, both in form and in result, is contained in that one article of faith; its consequence is, that the whole nutritive elements of every substance employed pass into the stomach, instead of being partially poured down the sink or sent out to the pigs, as is the case in this free and eminently great country. Yet we despise the eating of those

miserable French, with all our hearts, and look scornfully down upon it from the glorious summit of our boiling. The explanation of this insanity—though the word explanation is miserably misemployed in such a sense—is, that we imagine that because we buy more meat than they do we are necessarily better fed. So perhaps we should be if we swallowed it all, though even then a good deal might be said against so needless a use of flesh; but as, on an average, we take out of it, by what we call cooking, at least a fourth of its alimentary value, we do not in reality get any more chemical result out of the sixty pounds of meat (beef, mutton, veal, and pork) which each inhabitant of Great Britain (babies included) devours every year, than the Frenchman does out of the forty-five pounds of the same nature which he consumes. He, at all events, extracts the uttermost from what he digests, for the simple reason that it is all there to be digested; not a grain of it has gone into the sewers or the sty—it is all in the dish, either in solid or in liquid. We should think it folly to throw away the gravy which exudes during the act of roasting; but not only do we take it as quite natural to fling to waste the entire product of the far more exhausting process of boiling, but we resolutely apply that process to the larger part of what we eat, as if it were the right thing to do.

Excepting the harder vegetables the French boil absolutely nothing, in our meaning of the word at least. From Dunkerque to Bayonne, from Nice to Strasbourg, not one ounce of anything goes into the pot unless it be to make soup: but then the nation lives on soup. Roast meat costs too much for the everyday consumption of a population whose earnings average eighteenpence a

head: so they feed on a copious stew of bacon, sausage, cabbage, potatoes, and bread—and very good indeed it is, provided one is hungry. This aspect of the case, of course, excludes all idea of serious cookery; it means feeding and nothing else; but it is feeding in which everything is food, where what has been stewed out stops in the stew, where not one scrap is lost, where every centime spent produces its full result in the stomach.

The same law applies everywhere, in every rank. As we rise in the scale of outlay, and, consequently, of types of nourishment, we find no change; the principle is the same throughout the land—eat everything, waste nothing. But the details become vastly more interesting when skill comes into play, for then we see what art can do to adorn economy. The cooking at French hotels and restaurants, which is all that most travellers know anything about, gives but a faint idea of the feeding in use in families; for not only are the quantities and the expense much larger in one case than the other, but the flavours are stronger, coarser, less varied, and less true. It is inside real homes that French eating should be studied, for it is there alone that it can be examined in reality and in perfection. The nation—whatever we may think—does not dine at *cafés*; such a plan would break up the affectionate habits which the French so fondly cherish; it would be nasty and too dear. The nation takes its nourishment within its own four walls, so as to get it better and cheaper, and to retain, in all its force, the eminently social character of the act. And this applies to every class, without exception; for the great dinners in Paris private houses are as superior, in delicacy and refinement of execution, to

what the best restaurants can produce, as is the home feeding of the peasants to what they could get in the country wine-shops. *Café* cookery employs, even in its highest forms, too many artifices; it seeks too much to attain effect and vigour; it is not natural; its sauces are too powerful—they hide the intimate essence of the food: in one word, it does not realise the fundamental principle of carefully preserving unimpaired the particular aroma, the special perfume, which should inherently belong to every dish, and which gives to it its own distinctive nature. And furthermore, the restaurants never offer to their customers certain well-known dishes which form part of the regular daily list for home use, and which stand so high in French appreciation, that they are ordered several times a-week in moderate houses. Such are the more ordinary vegetable soups (whose name is legion), the endless shapes of stews and of the simpler ragouts, the hundred forms of preparing eggs, the infinite variety of cheap *plats sucrés*. It is useless to attempt to describe such products, or even to give a list of them, especially as they are to be found in all the cookery-books; but their number is so great, and their merit is so real, that they alone suffice, without including the high-class cookery, to place French feeding above that of the whole world outside.

Here, however, habit and previous opinion may perhaps claim to have their say, and to protest against anything but "plain joints." There are many virtuous people who live and die in the intense belief that what they so oddly call "made dishes"—as if everything they swallow were not "made" too—are unwholesome and unworthy, and that "roast and boiled" are the sole manners of preparation worthy of

British teeth. There is absolutely nothing to be said in reply to such ideas, for prejudice is so hard a master that it prevents all possibility of fair comparison, and blinds us to the most convincing proofs. It would therefore be quite useless to expect that, for the reasons already given, any real Englishman will believe that these "made dishes" are quite as nutritive as roast meat, and are vastly more so than the same substances when boiled. Even the strong arguments of economy and almost unlimited variety which the French system supplies, might fail to produce any real effect on minds which are resolved beforehand, as so many are, that nothing is to be learnt across the Channel. But there are enough inquisitive people round us to make it well worth while to show in what this economy and this variety consist, so that they, at all events, may judge whether they will try to begin the revolution which, sooner or later, must be enforced in English eating.

In giving details of the cost of housekeeping, the difficulty is to choose a thoroughly fair example which honestly and truthfully sets forth an average case without exaggeration either way. Twenty years ago it would have been impossible to even attempt to do so, because the cost of food then varied widely all over France, certain places being about twice as dear as others. But railways have now changed all that; they have levelled prices almost everywhere, and have suppressed those singularly cheap residences in which English people used to seek refuge, like St Malo and St Omer. There are still a few outlying villages, fifty kilometres from the nearest station, where a chicken can be got for eighteenpence; but with those exceptions a chicken is now worth about the same all over France:

and the same may be said, in substance, of every other article of food. The towns are dearer than the country, because of the *octroi* dues which are levied on all provisions which enter them, but that difference can be allowed for with tolerable exactness; and it may be estimated, without much fear of error, that the cost of food in France is now about 10 per cent higher in the towns, and 20 per cent higher in Paris, than it is in the rural districts. Of course this calculation is not intended to apply to every case; it shows only a general mean, but that mean is near enough to the reality to enable us to work upon it. It must, however, be added, that during the last few years, and especially since the war, prices have gone up enormously, and that the figures which express the present cost of living are certainly one-third higher than they were in 1855. With these explanations before us, let us take a middle-class Paris family, living reasonably well, wisely economical, but in no way stingy, and let us see how its account-book stands. In order to provide fair ground of comparison with the outlay of an English household of corresponding rank, the example chosen is that of a cheery home, which includes nine people—three big ones, three little ones (who eat like big ones), and three servants. It should be added that there is somebody to dinner nearly every day, and a regular dinner-party once a-month, and that the service is performed with a tolerable amount of elegance.

From the 1st September to 30th November 1871 (ninety-one days) that family expended 1801 francs, 10 centimes (£72, 0s. 10d.), in food of every kind, excluding only wine; so that the exact average per week was 140 francs (£5, 12s.) As there were, including friends, ten

people fed every day, the cost per head per day amounted to exactly two francs, or one shilling and sevenpence. This outlay included £7, 6s. 10d. for three dinner-parties of about a dozen people each. During the same period the cost of the wine consumed was 504 francs (£20, 3s. 2d.), of which 364 francs were for ordinary wine, and 240 francs for good wine. Meat, in all its forms, with poultry, represented £30, 1s. of the total, and consequently came to £2, 6s. 8d. per week, which gives 6s. 8d. per day, or 8d. per head for each of the ten people. Bread cost £7, 1s., and the rest was spent on a considerable variety of objects, as is proved by the fact that the cook's book contains an average of sixteen entries every day. That was the cost; now let us see what they got for it.

Coffee and bread and butter began the day at eight o'clock. At half-past eleven came the breakfast, composed of two dishes of meat, one of vegetables, cheese, dessert, and coffee. The children had a small eating of their own at half-past three, made up of bread and jam, chocolate, or fruit. The dinner included soup, an *entrée* and a *rôti*, vegetables, sometimes a *plat sucré*, cheese, dessert, coffee and *liqueurs*. At nine came tea or *tilleul*. And do not let it be imagined that all this was simple cookery; a good deal of it was so, but each day brought out at least one *plat* which required experience and execution, while the *menus* of the dinner-parties were little gems of delicate workmanship. This latter part of the subject is perhaps worthy of detailed analysis, for English housewives may, not improbably, be curious to know how much a Paris dinner costs the giver. In the case before us the servants are exceptionally intelligent, and do everything without

orders or surveillance; the mistress has only to say to the man, "So many people to dinner to-morrow; the best service; tell Marie to bring me her ideas;" and when the cook has submitted her "ideas," and the *menu* is settled, the lady troubles her head no more about it. Such a privilege is, however, somewhat rare; the rule on these occasions is, that mistresses of the middle class (it would be useless to talk of the very rich) are obliged to look about themselves a little, to order the dessert and to arrange the flowers. The programme which we will examine was for ten persons; every article in it, excepting the dessert, was executed at home by the cook alone; this is what it cost, all ingredients included:—

	£	s.	d.
White soup,	0	4	3
Tunny, olives, and radishes,	0	1	7
Fillets of sole, à la Orly,	0	6	9
10 cailles au nid,	0	16	2
Timbale Milanaise,	0	5	2
Roast fillet of beef,	0	10	2
Salad,	0	0	6
Green peas,	0	2	0
Fried cream,	0	2	5
Cheese,	0	1	7
Dessert (composed of wondrous things from Boissier's),	0	11	4
	£3	1	11

Deduct for economy on the expenditure of the following day, in consequence of the relics left in hand,

There remains for the cost of the eatables,

Wine—

1 bottle of Montrachet,	0	2	6
2 bottles of Chapelle de Chambertin,	0	6	6
2 bottles of Gruaud Larose,	0	10	0
2 bottles of Champagne,	0	12	0
Coffee and liqueurs,	0	4	6
Flowers,	0	4	0
Candles and extra fires,	0	7	0
Additional man to wait,	0	4	0

Total cost of the entertainment,

All these items are copied textu-

ally from the cook's book, excepting the wine, which appears at its original cost when bottled and laid down in the cellar years ago, but which now represents two or three times the value shown. Two of the dishes in the list merit explanation—the *cailles au nid* and the fried cream. Each quail, when cooked, is ornamented with his head, tail, and outspread wings; he is then placed on his "nest," which is formed of the bottom of an artichoke, and is half filled with simulated eggs made of white stuffing. The nests are arranged in a circle in a large round dish, and bathe in a dark brown sauce. A prettier combination to look upon, or a pleasanter one to eat, can scarcely be desired. *Crème frite* consists in balls of hot, liquid, creamy custard cased in a diaphanous golden pellicale of frizzled batter; in the mouth they burst and melt with a result that is fantastically delicious. And the wages of the woman who created these impossibilities are £19 a-year!

Two questions present themselves here. What would such a dinner have cost in England, if indeed it could be produced here at all in any ordinary house? And how is it that French peasant girls, at £19 a-year, can attain the talent necessary to achieve so admirable a success for £2, 11s. 11d.? The first of these two queries may be left to get an answer for itself; the second takes us into a new element of the French food question.

It is evident that the system which prevails in France could not exist at all if the genius of cookery were not naturally implanted in the heads and fingers of the class of women who administer the kitchens. But no innate predisposition towards the culinary art would enable a Normandy farm-girl, who has spent her youth in guarding her master's

geese and turkeys, to make fried cream. Study, manipulation, and experience are needed before she can reach such a height as that; and how is she to acquire them? She does it because Providence has been pleased to make her imitative and laborious. She leaves the geese when she is fourteen, and becomes scrub at £3 a-year under the village notary's wife; then she is appointed plate-washer at an inn in the neighbouring town; she rises to the post of kitchen-maid, and in that capacity learns to pare vegetables, and to roast a little, and gets her first insight into serving. At two-and-twenty she has saved up £5, 3s. 6d., and with that she starts for Paris, "where she has a cousin." Here she becomes kitchen-maid again, but in a decent family, where things are nicely done, and where the cook knows her business. From that moment begins her education, but instead of lasting half a lifetime, and of being contemptibly incomplete at the end of that long period, as is the case with our own food-spoilers, twelve months suffice to enable the French girl to cook cleverly for her own account. Then she shifts her place once more, and gets £16 a-year in a quiet family, where the mistress looks after the kitchen herself, and gives counsel to the cook. Most French ladies know a little of the delicate rules which regulate the preparation of food—in theory, at all events; some of them even are brilliant executants with their own hands; the consequence is, that the new cook gets all the advice she needs, and after a little floundering, begins to utilise the power of listening and copying which the French possess in so singular a degree. If the sacred fire of her art really dwells within her, she spends her evenings in profound reading of her cookery-

book, which she devours as if it were an exciting novel; thus she leaps rapidly into a *cordon bleu*. But as her intelligence develops down goes her honesty; one falls as the other rises, as a rule at least, so that the best cooks are generally the greatest thieves. In the larger Paris houses many of them regularly overcharge from three to ten francs a-day, according to their own ambition and the size of the establishment. These are not the women who permit people to subsist on £5, 12s. per week: that result can only be attained, either with an exceptionally honest cook, who is very difficult to find, or by constant verification from the mistress. Men-cooks are worse still: most of them coolly tell you that you must not expect them to be economical, as if the thought of saving their master's money were beneath their dignity. Still, taking France as a whole, particularly in the country, nineteenth-twentieths of the cooks are steady, honest creatures, who add the painstaking research of little cheapnesses to marked ability in their trade. It is they who make French eating what it is—a compound of condensed nutriment, innumerable tastes, and low expenditure. In the example which has just been quoted, the cook is a good faithful servant, who takes hearty pride in all the reductions which she can operate in the weekly outlay. There are not many such in Paris, but there are tens of thousands of them in the provinces.

In considering the sum spent by the family we are investigating, it must be remembered that the cost of each individual article was higher than that of the same object in the dearest town in England. In the country the same feeding could be achieved for one-fifth less, or £4, 10s. per week. It will now be understood that the explanation

of this cheapness of total result, as compared with us, lies solely in the organisation of home life in France, and in the system of the cookery. It has been already said that the first sources of economy lie in the smallness of the quantities, in the consequent absence of waste, in careful marketing, and in the utilisation of every ounce of nutrition contained in the food. To these causes must be added the immense saving which is realised, in comparison with ourselves, in the feeding of the servants. In France servants eat immediately after their masters have finished, and content themselves with what is left. If the relics are really insufficient for their appetites, a special dish of some common kind is added—lentils and bacon, or cheap veal or mutton and white haricots, or sausages and pease-pudding. Never do the servants touch the more expensive sorts of meat; poultry, or game, or sweet things are utterly forbidden to them: all that may remain of that kind is kept for next day's breakfast. And yet they eat as much as they like, without stint or limit. By the association of these various conditions, a family of ten people is enabled to live admirably well in Paris—ininitely better than its equals do in England—for 1s. 7d. per head per day, or in the country for about 1s. 3d.

This outlay is represented by a variety of dishes of which we have no conception; even in families who carry economy farther still, who deprive themselves of every luxury, who cut down their expenditure to one shilling per head per day, the forms of preparation are so multiplied that no sense of sameness is produced by the almost daily employment of the same cheap viands. To take the most ordinary example: the beef which has served

to make *bouillon*, the most elementary and exhausted form of meat which can possibly be quoted, is prepared in nine different ways: it may be served cold, *en vinaigrette*—that is to say, cut into slices, with oil and vinegar, mixed up with anchovies and chopped herbs; it may be dressed hot, *au gratin*, or minced, *en boulettes*, or *en hachis*, the three latter being accompanied by mushrooms, and by a *sauce piquante* or tomatoes; or it may be done *à la jardinière*, with various vegetables, or *en persillade*, or with onions, or *à la bourgeoise*, or in little pies. The object of these nine arrangements is to give back a flavour to the fibre which has lost it in long boiling, and to so utilise agreeably a tasteless remnant. The nine results are excellent, but habit generally prescribes that they shall be employed for breakfast only, like omelettes, and the other forms of egg, which are never served at dinner. This illustration is but one out of a hundred which might be given; and if it does not suffice, let it be remembered that the first cookery-book we open will tell us how to make one hundred and ten soups and sixty sauces; how to dress beef in one hundred and seventy fashions, veal in one hundred and forty manners, and mutton in one hundred and twenty, without counting the interminable varieties of form, taste, and colour which may be communicated to game, poultry, vegetables, and eggs. Of pastry, puddings, and sweet *entremets*, there are more than three hundred sorts. And let it be remembered that every single one of these thousand dishes has its own special, individual, proper nature—its own aroma, which must be so exactly rendered that they can be instantly recognised and appreciated by the palate. Not more than one-twentieth of the preparations which

compose this curious list are really used in daily home life : many of the compositions described in the 'Cuisinier Impérial' and its fellow-publications are too costly and too complicated for common use ; but even fifty varieties of beef and mutton, and other ordinary aliments, enable a French household to change its feeding so perpetually that the same dish is not used twice in a fortnight. That variety is not unhealthy, that "kickshaws" do not damage digestion, is proved by the rarity in France of dyspepsia and other disorders of the stomach : the lightness of the bread, the relatively moderate eating of the entire population, may partially explain this ; but, at all events, the fact would seem to indicate that the whole system is a wise one hygienically.

The rarer products of French cookery are beyond the reach of the nation as a whole ; daily home life knows little of them, but yet an allusion to them can scarcely be omitted in an examination of the food of France. It is, however, in their local rather than in their general character that they present real interest. Everybody has dined at Philippe's and the Moulin Rouge ; everybody has eaten, at least once in his life, "when he was in Paris," one curious dinner of which the memory dwells within him ; when he made acquaintance with a *bisque d'écrevisses*, and a *sauté de filets de sole à la Vénétienne*, and a *Cromesqui de volaille*, and *cailles en cuisse*, and a *crème à la Bouronnaise*, or half-a-dozen other amazing compounds with similarly unintelligible denominations. But the number of us who have eaten *grilled Royans* at Bordeaux, or crayfish out of the Fontaine de Vaucluse, or in Lorraine, or *calissons* at Aix, or *violets* and *roses* at Grasse, or *foies de canard* in the Périgord, or

the other peculiar products of twenty other places, is probably somewhat limited. And, more than all, how many of us have dined at the *Réserve* at Marseille, that famous restaurant on the Mediterranean shore, where the brothers Roubion have acquired immortal fame ? There is but one word in English which describes the sensation of the traveller who eats there for the first time — that word is revelation. New truths seem to be imparted to you as you swallow, new objects and new theories of life seem to float around you, strange ideas come to you across the sea ; and when it all is over, when with a calm cigar, your legs stretched out, you silently digest and think, with the *Chateau d'If* and the flickering waves before you in the moonlight, you gratefully thank Providence for having led you there. All this is the effect of garlic, which works upon you like *haschisch*. You began your dinner with *Preyres* and *oursins*, shell-fish which are as good as oysters, and with them you drank the stony-flavoured white wine which grows on the rocks at Cassis, half-way to Toulon. Then you took a soup called *Bourride*, a fascinating mixture of creamy fish, thin bread, and *ailloli*, a *purée* of hot garlic. Then came red mullets, *en papillote*, the woodcocks of the sea. Your mouth having become somewhat hot, you stopped to cool yourself with Roubion's *Musigny* of 1837, stimulated by a little *Poutarque*, a preparation of fish-eggs far superior to *caviar*. Comforted and strengthened you began again on filets of duck, into which the essence of a hundred olives from the Crau had been injected by simultaneous stewing. One glass of *Latour* of 1854 materially helped you at this juncture. Then came a *Chateaubriand*, floating in a *remoulade* of which one-half was *ailloli*

again. Here, as you well remember, you needed three more glasses of that *Latour*. Vegetables you refused, you had had enough; but you toyed a little with an unknown soft cake soaked in syrup of *Kirsch* assisted by un-iced dry champagne, (*Roussillon's carte d'or*). Finally, you got to your hotel to bed, and tossed about all night in a red-hot fever. In your fitful sleep you dreamt that you were Monte Christo; and you felt frightfully ill next morning; that was garlic again: the people of the country told you, however, that you would become accustomed to it after four or five years of patient practice. "The sea hath its pearls, the heaven hath its stars;" England has Richmond and Greenwich; France has the Pavillon Henri Quatre at St Germain, and the Réserve at Marseille. Maids of honour and whitebait, however, do not reach the height of the *filet Béarnaise* in Seine-et-Oise, or of the *ailloli* in the Bouches du Rhone: they are certainly the pearls and stars of lofty eating. If you doubt it, try. The white fish on Lake Superior, the prawns who get fat on the dead negroes who are buried in the sea at Rio Janeiro, the canvas-backs in October at Baltimore, are all sweet to eat and to recollect, but they are pale indeed by the side of *ailloli*.

The Réserve is, however, after all, only the completest expression of the cookery of the whole district; all Provence feeds on garlic: the annual garlic fair is the great event of the year in the villages which have the glory to receive it. And the old kingdom of René d'Anjou grows its own truffles too, and has red-legged partridges, and quantities of trout in the affluents of the Durance, and grives which really are most wonderful in the winter when the juniper-berries are ripe. But,

good and curious as the feeding is in some respects, Provence is terribly incomplete; as there is no grass there are no cows, and consequently no fresh milk or butter, excepting what the goats give. Again, all roasting is performed there before brushwood fires, whose smoke lends a most nasty flavour to the meat, just as the wine-skins in Spain make their contents taste of resin, and as English coal gives a special odour to our own roast-beef, which is instantly detected by the unaccustomed tongues of foreigners. In the Bordelais the food is excellent; garlic is relatively rare, even amongst the peasantry; poultry is abundant, and the fruit superb; the nectarines particularly, are perhaps the finest in the world. The figs, however, are less perfect than the little green ones which grow in the mistral of arid Provence, especially for drying, but they have merit; and as for ortolans, Gascony may be called their autumn home. In Brittany the eating offers no kind of special type, excepting for people who delight in buckwheat bread, which is the only local product. In the north-eastern provinces everybody is well fed; but, excepting the general use of *bisque* and of *beurre d'écrevisses*, which is rendered possible by the singular abundance of crayfish in every rivulet, there is no indigenous specialty. The wise employment of herbs and of *tisanes* is universal. It belongs to no province and to no department in particular; it is everywhere throughout the land. No salad is complete without its *fourniture*, which consists of chervil, pimperl, tarragon, and chives, all daintily chopped up, so that their subtle perfumes shall pervade the leaves of *Romaine* or of lettuce. Scarcely a sauce is possible without its "bouquet," which results from the distil-

lations of a little bunch of parsley, thyme, and laurel. The water in which fish is boiled is prepared beforehand by decocting the same herbs in it. As for *tisanes*, their name is legion; and though they are for the most part rather medicinal than nutritive, they occupy a sufficiently important place in the economy of French home life to merit mention here. The first and most notable of them all is *tilleul*, made of the dried flower and young leaves of lime-trees; then come marsh-mallow, violets, apple, cherry-stalks, orange-flowers, tucilage, camomile, ash-leaves, arnica, mélisse, verbena, fennel, erysimum, valerian, white stinging nettle, ivy, absinthe, hop-blossoms, and twenty others. Each substance possesses a special merit of its own, and produces a particular effect. Some are stimulating, some are soothing, some aid digestion, others bring about the most odd results by their action on our organs, one or two induce sweet sleep and abundant perspiration. In every house in France a stock is kept of these various ingredients, ready dried; when wanted, a little handful is thrown into a teapot, boiling water is poured over it, and in three minutes the gentle remedy is prepared. It is almost pleasant to be ill in France, in order to make acquaintance with such agreeable physic. The variety of substances in common use is so considerable, that it implies an extent of knowledge of herbs and simples beyond what we have any idea of here. This knowledge is insensibly acquired in early childhood from constant contact and from constant use. Every French girl of ten years old knows what is the right *tisane* to administer in a given case; she gives it to her dolls for practice.

But if *tisanes* are universally and equally employed all over France,

the same cannot be said of meat in its various forms. The inequalities of consumption are singularly marked between different towns. Each inhabitant of Paris pays for 130 lb. of butcher's meat every year (beef, mutton, veal, and lamb); but at Le Mans, the rate per head falls to 60 lb. Rennes and Rheims are the only two places which reach nearly to the Paris figure; all the other large towns lie between the two extremes. Of pork, in its many forms, Chalons eats the most, for it takes 35 lb. per head; Paris consumes 22 lb.; while Bordeaux uses only 5 lb. In liquids the differences are almost greater. Each Parisian absorbs 113 quarts of wine, 13 of beer, 2 of cider, and 12 of brandy; while Lille employs 18 quarts of wine, 153 of beer, 12 of brandy, and no cider. Rennes, on the contrary, needs 400 quarts of cider per inhabitant, and 21 of wine. At Rouen, the average swallowing of brandy reaches 45 quarts per annum for each man, woman, and child. But these figures, though they show us what the urban populations use, give no idea whatever of the average consumption of the whole country, particularly in meat. Exact returns can only be obtained from towns where the *octroi* is enforced, and where, consequently, a precise account is kept of everything which goes in or out. But when it is remembered that the towns contain only seven millions out of the thirty-seven millions who people France, we see at once how valueless these figures are as a general guide. The mass of the rural population, which includes about three-quarters of the nation, does not eat butcher-meat more than once a-week, and even pork is an article of luxury. The consequence is, that the official returns indicate, as has been already said, an average consumption,

throughout the eighty-nine Departments (this was reckoned up before the war), of only 45 lb. of all kinds of meat per head, pork included—which is less than a third of the Paris rate. Each Londoner eats 211 lb. of meat per annum, which is 59 lb. more than the Parisian asks for; but the latter claims 400 lb. of bread, while the former contents himself with 330. Paris shows, therefore, an excess of 70 lb. in this item. In vegetables, Paris has a greater advantage still: each of its inhabitants consumes 300 lb. of them against 141 in London. Also in butter, milk, and fruit, Paris is ahead of us in varying proportions. In Prussia, Spain, the German Duchies, Holland, Belgium, and Italy, still less meat is eaten than in France; in Southern Germany, however, the quantity per head is rather greater.

If we admit that Paris and London may be taken as fair points of comparison between France and England, these details, incomplete and insufficient as they are, suffice to prove that the average total weight of food of all kinds consumed per head across the Channel is higher than we attain ourselves. It is not made up in the same way—there is more meat here, more bread and vegetables there; but it may be said with certainty that any difference of nutritive value which may result from this difference of composition is more than compensated, not only by the extra quantities of other food than meat, but also by the form of cookery adopted by our neighbours, which, as has been insisted upon throughout this article, leaves in the food every grain of nourishment which it originally possessed.

It is therefore perfectly reasonable to assert that the French are at least as well fed as we are, if not

better; while they spend much less than we do, and have vastly more agreeable eating. What is the reason of this difference? It cannot be attributed to climate, for the whole north of France is as wet, cold, and uncomfortable as any district we can show. Neither is it explainable by special physical necessities on either part which call for a particular type of food. The only cause which we can assign for it on the French side is that undefinable, motherless influence, known as national peculiarity, the most untraceable of the great springs of modern life. Who can pretend to determine how national peculiarities arise? And even if we limit our consideration of them to this one point of the composition of the food of France, who can tell us why or how it has grown to be what it is? The handiness and cleverness of the people in all culinary matters are but a national peculiarity after all. It is useless to refer to them for an explanation, for they simply throw us back once more on to the original difficulty. Poverty and thrift do not help us either, for other nations besides the French are poor and thrifty without attaining their consummate skill in cooking. All that we can say is, that the home ability of the French, their singular household craft, are appanages of their race; they have them because they have them, because Providence has so willed it, just as the English possess the specialty of hashed mutton, and of never going out without an umbrella. But, however hidden be the first origins of their present ways, we are able to indicate with approximate precision the actual elements of their dining power; if we cannot define its primary causes, at all events we can detect its immediate agents. These elements, these agents, have already been referred to

at the commencement of this article; but now that we have gone through the consequences and the effects which they bring about, we may, with much utility, return to the point we started from, and try to see not only what we can learn, but, even more, what we can apply.

So far as it is possible to judge from the meagre details contained in the old chronicles of French home life, the system of feeding now in use does not seem to have begun to assume its form until about a hundred years ago; the accumulated contributions of three or four generations have sufficed to carry it to the perfection which it now presents. One example will be enough to show that, at the end of the seventeenth century, eating had in no way reached, even in the best houses, the character which it has acquired since. In 1678 Madame de Maintenon wrote a letter to her brother, who had just been married, to tell him how to live. After strictly limiting him to an outlay of fourteen francs per day (including wine, wood, and candle) for his wife, himself, and ten servants, she goes on to describe his *menu*. She says: "You will have a soup, with a chicken in it, and you will have all the *bouilli* served together in a large dish; it is admirable in that sort of disorder. You can have sausages one day, veal another, or sheep's tongue, or a leg of mutton, or a shoulder, or two chickens. I forgot your breakfast, which is a capon or anything else, and a *compote* of pears or apples." There is no mention of any cookery here—it is all rough meat; no allusion is made to vegetables, which have since become so essential a basis of nourishment in France. If this were the feeding which the Comte d'Aubigné found sufficient, if this were the programme which the King's mistress sketched

out for her own brother, it is reasonable to conclude that it represented a high average, and that the nation, as a whole, was far away behind it. It was during the Regency that real cookery may be said to have first been introduced, but its action was then limited to the upper classes only, and to the relatively short supply of materials, especially in fruit and vegetables, which the markets offered. As the cultivation of roots and of leguminous food extended, the range of kitchen action extended too; but, when we remember that it was not till about 1790 that even potatoes began to be seriously grown in France as an article of food, it becomes evident that the employment of garden-produce on a large scale is quite a modern feature in the composition of French eating. The use of vegetables, dried and fresh, fibrous and farinaceous, has gone on spreading until it has carried their consumption to nearly half the total weight of food employed. The change in the details and results of cooking have been proportionately great, the entire system having been built up slowly to its present shape, with the successive aid of each new alimentary substance which time has added to the list. Concurrently with the invention and the development of new products the science of their uses has budded out; the entire question has gradually marched ahead, materially and artistically, throughout all France, stimulated by growing needs, guided by progressing education. This much, at all events, we can see and prove; where we fail to find any explanation is in the mystery of the starting-point: it is there that we are obliged to content ourselves with the vague unsatisfactory answer of "national peculiarities." But if we are unable to suggest why it is that the French can cook, and can

go on discovering fresh forms of cookery, adding still more dishes to their prodigious catalogue, or why they have learnt to utilise so many articles which we neglect, so that every trifle which falls within their grasp is made to serve a purpose, at least we can clearly recognise what they use, and how they use it. They have not kept their cunning to themselves; they have published it to the world by example and by precept, inviting and enabling everybody to follow in their track.

Can we follow them? Can we, by degrees, adopt in England the system which has been worked out across the Channel? Can we attain our neighbour's faculty of eating cheaply, variedly, nutritively, and agreeably? That we can do so partially is probable, if not certain. Our upper strata are already trying it lamely and insufficiently, but with goodwill and satisfaction; their progress thus far has been slow and incomplete. What they call "French dishes" are not yet French in the real meaning of the word; they are imitations, not originals. But we are getting on, and some of us may finish by acquiring the purity of taste, the delicacy of palate, the long habit of comparison, which permit the eater to judge whether the cook has correctly and critically done her duty. But is it to be expected that the entire nation can be led to modify its habits and to adopt the principles which regulate French feeding? To this question the answer can scarcely be affirmative at present. Even if our middle and lower classes could vanquish their deeply-rooted prejudices, and could be led to see and own that the first law of dressing food is so to treat it that it shall retain the entire power of nutrition which nature gave it, where are we to get the cooks? Even supposing that all the theoret-

ical difficulties were suppressed—that the whole people, with one voice, called out for soup and stews, and refused to go on with boiled and baked—where are we to find the women to whose hands we could intrust the realisation of the wish? The same law of national peculiarities which has rendered it possible for the French to create their system forbids us thus far to copy them. There, everybody knows how to cook, or can learn to do so rapidly: here, the genius of kitchen-work is absent; we are born without it, and we do not grow to it in after-life. What can be more deplorable than the helpless ignorance on the subject which is shown by the wives and daughters of our workmen? what can be more idiotic than the resolute refusal of all servants who are not cooks to learn what cooking is? Their repulsion is so deeply rooted, it is so inherent in their blood, that the English nurse-maids who live in France invariably refuse to take even a passing lesson from what is going on around them; they like the feeding infinitely better than what they get at home, but they will not condescend to study its production so as to be able to carry knowledge back with them on their return. Any serious transformation of our system is quite hopeless, so long as this fundamental difficulty continues to exist. The richer and better educated amongst us may struggle after change; they may even effect it to some extent; but the tradespeople, and the populace, and the peasants will go on as they are, until their women are lifted up to a higher appreciation of their home duties, and of the infinite importance of food as a domestic influence for good. Let them keep their tea and beer: cider and light wines are not fitted to their temperaments, and, so far as liquids are concerned, our

habits may perhaps be suited to our climate; but can we not discover and supply some really effective remedy to their actual indifference about the solid portion of their eating? In this country of public meetings and public charity, where everybody subscribes his mite to aggregate philanthropy, could we not establish cooking-shows, with prizes for the most proficient? It would be very easy to draw up a first programme, descriptive of a dozen dishes—of the simplest kind, of course, but involving the employment of various cheap ingredients, and especially of herbs and vegetables. The matter should be regarded solely in its application to the poor; it must be dealt with at the bottom—the rich can get along alone. The effort should be one of direct teaching rather than of example, for the simple reason that such examples as exist are hidden away out of sight in our dining-rooms, where the poor cannot contemplate them. Some such plan as this is probably the only one which would offer any prospect of success, and an entire generation would doubtless have to pass away before the effort could produce its fruit. Still the result would be so excellent that both time and effort would be well employed. Our girls in country-houses, the wives and daughters of our parsons, could scarcely use their idle hours more usefully than in stimulating such a movement. There would be a practical reality about it which would please unimaginative natures, while the more dreamy of us would be attracted by the pretty theory of regeneration of national taste. Everybody would find some kind of satisfaction in such a work, especially the ploughman husband and the blacksmith brother when they came home to supper. Surely it is worth trying; surely we are

not incapable of the attempt; surely we cannot all be so blinded by prejudice and stupid custom that none of us will consent to copy what the French do so vastly better than ourselves.

If we need additional encouragement, if purely material advantages do not suffice to tempt us to modify our doings, let us look back to France once more and see what moral results we could possibly extract from an adoption of its ways. There we see a race each family of which seeks its pleasures together as a rule, where the home tie is not enfeebled by the attraction of the wine-shop, where mutual affection softens the roughness of uneducated minds. Is it not fair to attribute some part of this indoor cohesion to the effect of meals? If a good dinner constitutes an indisputable attraction to ourselves, why should it not produce the same action on our poorer brothers? It does in France. The French peasant stops at home for it just as we do, because he likes it, because home gives him more and better than he can find elsewhere; because being together, young and old, they laugh, and so grow to regard eating as a motive of union, as a time for cheeriness. This aspect of the subject has already been alluded to, but it merits a second mention now, for it supplies extremely important arguments; not that joy at dinner is an exclusive property of the French—we have it too to some extent and under certain conditions—but because with them it is a national feature, consequent not only on their temperament, but also on their wise views of the function which they are discharging, and on the agreeable shape they give to it. We need not despair of some day reaching the same end, by employing the same means, any more

than the French should doubt of acquiring our solidity of character if they would but recognise the value of fixed principles, and resolutely set to work to believe in something—God, king, or each other. Their economy in the kitchen is another enviable quality, for it shows us how calculating prudence can be applied without en-tailing the too distinct sentiment of privation; how cheapness and satisfaction can be combined; how a useful lesson can be enforced each day without assuming the form of punishment. In England economy is almost always nasty; in France it frequently assumes a character so subtle and artistic, that it loses its repulsive physiognomy, and indeed sometimes acquires a sort of charm, in consequence of the infinite skill with which it is administered, and of the admiration which that skill provokes. A third result of the French system is that it necessitates, or at all events insensibly produces, an almost universal power of home usefulness amongst the women. It expands their *rôle* in life, it creates for them a special duty, it teaches them that wise truth which most of them so clearly recog-

nise and so cordially practise, that no indoor detail is beneath a woman's care; it further develops in them the handiness, the adroit fingering which have become distinctive of the modern Frenchwoman. Such results as these are well worth working for; and though there are exceptions amongst our neighbours, though they sometimes have as wretched homes as we can show, the rule incontestably is, that their working classes know no misery like ours. Their system of eating enters for a large part into the explanation of this fact.

The association of these moral consequences with most attractive material satisfactions gives to French eating a special place in actual civilisation. Progress may improve it to a still higher form, other nations may grow to it hereafter; but, in the present condition of the world, nothing equal to it can be found elsewhere; and it has the admirable character of being in no way the privilege of a class: it is the common property of the entire people; it can be appreciated and applied by all, from top to bottom of the scale. The one condition of its use is to wish to use it.

A CENTURY OF GREAT POETS, FROM 1750 DOWNWARDS.

NO. V.—ROBERT BURNS.

ALL lives are tragedies: and it may be that those that seem the bitterest and darkest take their intenser shades chiefly from the fact that adventitious circumstances have brought them more vividly before the eyes of the world. Such a reason might at least hold good as an explanation of the supremely tragic character of the lives of poets. Of all we have yet ventured to touch in this series, Wordsworth alone has pursued his life to a calm and ordinary conclusion, without passing through the heaviest clouds that can overshadow humanity. With the others the passage has been bitter as sorrow and suffering could make it; and not only sorrow and suffering—that which gives its deepest pang to pain, and its bitterest prostration to ruin, moral weakness and wrong-doing has woven itself in with these typical lives in an inseparable thread of darkness. The splendour of the gifts with which it is combined makes this gloomy web only the more apparent; and through all the brightness and nobleness of the web it runs its darkling pattern, its intricate design, impairing the beauty, diminishing the greatness, yet adding a sorrowful human meaning, which touches while it humbles every spectator. And in no life of genius has this fatal darkness been more apparent than in the life of Burns. Circumstances have set it before the world in such prominence that to many it seems the chief thing notable, the first memory attached to his name. Three parts of a century have passed since in premature gloom and lurid splendour the sun went down for him at noonday; and since then the world

has never ceased to dwell upon this warp in his nature and stain on his life. The reticences with which relations and friends have surrounded the name of Coleridge, have been contemptuously thrown to the winds in the case of the ploughman-poet. Whose feelings were to be considered among a race of small farmers and tradesmen, too much honoured by incurring even the censure of the great world? Such small personages, it is well understood, must stomach the reproach as they may. Therefore every man has had his fling and said his say about Burns. The greatness of the poet has given in many cases but a reason at once and an excuse for raking up all the follies of the ploughboy, and showing the gauger in his cups. Poor devil! as it was a fine fate for him to amuse his betters at their feasts while he lived, so it was a fine fate for him when he was dead to furnish them with a moral and gratify the complaisance of his superiors. And this impertinent folly—most impudent, most foolish, despite the protests of Lockhart and Wilson and Carlyle—has survived even to this day. Perhaps no one now would venture to speak of him with the affability and condescension which all, or almost all, of his contemporaries considered themselves justified in employing. But still, the facts that he was a ploughman and an exciseman, and was of dissipated habits, are much more prominent in his career to the general eye, especially out of Scotland, than are the nobler facts of his work and character. In Scotland, fortunately, thanks to the national fire which he perhaps was the first to raise again

out of its embers, after all the depression and discouragement of the seventeenth century, there exists such a warmth of feeling on this subject, that he who would touch our poet rudely may well bethink himself of our national motto before he makes the venture, and remember the thistle's sharp and instant reprisals. To have re-created that national feeling, that deep and warm and unquenchable patriotism which has made Scotland, small and poor, a force in the great universe, is no small work, however accomplished. Had there been any to do it for Ireland at the same dreary crisis, when the national spirit had sunk low, and discouragement had fallen upon its heart, what issues of courage and cheerful hope and warm individual exertion might there not have been! But Ireland had neither Burns nor Scott; and the genius which might have remoulded it—giving, by dint of poetry and imagination, such an impulse to all that was noble, reasonable, and resolute in the country, as no other influence could give—has flickered away in confusing lights, fantastic *Will-o'-the-wisps*, and eccentric gleams of contradictory guidance. Probably the amount of genius in the two lands has not been so unequal as the world supposes; but in the one it has been frittered away in wild melodious foolishness, without plan or union, in *Shan van Voghts* and faction-songs; whereas in the other it has been concentrated, and done the work which one great voice better than a hundred quavering pipes of smaller singers can do. When the world comes to recognise what a wonderful agency it is which in reality makes a great part of the difference between greatness and pettiness, happiness and unhappiness, for a country, then, perhaps, yet only perhaps, it will fare better with the poet. We say, only perhaps; for it is very doubtful whether the

Poet bred in an intellectual hothouse and trained for a special work, would have either heart or ability for it. The chances are, according to the perversity of human nature, either that the singer chosen for such a process would turn out incapable, or that his mind would choose some other channel. The man who would touch the deepest springs of human motive, must endure the difficulties and feel the fierce contention of every struggle that he sings.

A great deal too much, however, we think, has been made of the condition of life into which Burns was born. It had its disadvantages, but perhaps not more than those which belong to some other spheres. Two poets of that rich and splendid age which ushered in our own were born in exceptionally difficult circumstances. The one was a ploughman and the other a peer. Both lived and died tragically, in their youth, having had trial of cruel scourgings and woundings, bitter desertions, and still more bitter encouragements. Heaven forbid that any son of ours should emulate either fate; yet if such a terrible choice had to be made, would any man hesitate to choose for the boy most dear to him the fate of Burns rather than that of Byron? To ourselves there does not seem a moment's hesitation in the matter. Tragic and terrible as both are, there is a harmony and sweetness of life about the humble poet, a note of pathetic accordance amid all its discords with God's will and man's service, which is not in the other. It is premature to carry out the comparison, which we may resume at a later period. But the two, somehow, stand together in a sad separation from other men, in their individual places, made distinct by fortune. The one with everything (as people say) in his favour; the other with everything (as people

say) against him. And both failed, as men, tragically and mournfully. Yet the Peasant less tragically, less awfully, than the Peer. All the gentle compensations of nature, all her tears and sweetnesses, all the flowers with which she sprinkles the too early grave, are for the lowly, the proud, the tender child of poverty—the son of the soil. Heaven and earth weep over him with an indulgence, a pitiful awe of his weakness, which is not for the other. He is footsore and weary, his dress and his hands are all scratched with briars and thorns of toil; but, heaven pardon all their straying, these feet were loyal amid their stumblings, these hands laboured and pulled away the thorns out of the path of others. Never, or only by moments when the bravado of his time would seize him, did this man glory in shame. On the contrary, he repented in sackcloth and ashes, standing still to note his shortcomings, struggling against them, sometimes manfully if sometimes weakly, and when he could, repairing the wrong. Whatever may be said of the disadvantages of nature, it is clear that at least in this case the exceptionally unfortunate circumstances were better than the exceptionally fortunate; and that if one extremity of the social level is to be chosen for a poet, it is better that that extremity should be low than high—a farmhouse rather than a palace.

But though it is impossible to consider him as a man, without considering these circumstances of origin and calling, we think, we repeat, that Burns's rank in life has been made a great deal too much of. It was an accident which directed his genius into a special channel; but in that direction there was certainly more good than evil. His poverty and lowliness did for him what probably no amount of train-

ing could have done. It made him the natural expositor and prophet of a certain class, and that the widest and most numerous of any in the country. It might be well a century ago to utter condescending commendations of the "short and simple annals of the poor;" but at this present time he would be a bold critic who would venture to assert that a true study of life in what we call the lower classes, is either less interesting or less noble than a study of the lives of dukes and duchesses; indeed, the balance has turned, and our predilections are ready to go the other way. Duchesses and dukes, though sometimes admirable persons, have the lines of their life so traced out for them that, unless their characters be very exceptional indeed, there is but a very limited amount of profit to be got out of them; but the vast levels of human nature, where Sorrow and Pain, those greatest of dramatists, do their work most broadly—where the primitive emotions are less controlled by complicating cobwebs of new-fangled thought—where life is more outspoken, more logical, less self-contained,—these have an interest deeper and truer than all the high life ever recorded. Nothing but the fact of being to the manner born could enable a man to elucidate to us this great silent sea of living, which without such elucidation we should know only in those periodical storms which raise it into fury, and confound all the wisdom of the wise and the conclusions of the learned. So far as this goes, the accident of birth secured for Burns a very great and real advantage—all the advantage which a man derives from an immense "backing;" and from being the representative of a very large number of other men. Neither was there anything in his education to neutralise this advantage. For his

characteristic and peculiar office, which was not that of a poet in the abstract, but of a poet born to real and special use and service, no training could have been more perfect. He acquired letters as those do whom he had come into the world to interpret—painfully, toilsomely, at a cost which made the scanty sum of instruction dearer than the highest attainments of an education more easily acquired. Every new book was to him as an undiscovered country—a something novel and original won out of the niggardly hands of fate. The world of poetry and imagination was all the more lovely, all the more precious to him, that it lay side by side with the plainest and hardest of facts. Every intellectual step he made filled him with a delight and exultation such as a modern epicure of emotion would give worlds to taste. All that belonged to the mind and its ethereal existence—all, in short, that was not hard toil and actual struggle—was fresh and sweet, and novel and lovely, full of a beauty which surprised him, and took his heart by storm. And while he had this delightful relish of novelty in everything intellectual, his moral training was such as the world could not have surpassed. He was the son of a good, honest, and honourable man. He was brought up fearing God and serving his neighbour—if, perhaps, within too narrow a circle, and with too absolute a limitation of the title, yet cheerfully, unselfishly, without even the idea of separating his own interests from those of the intimate few around him. In all the events of the life of William Burns's household there is nothing that is not worthy and noble. A man was above the reach of shame who came from such a house. He had as good a setting out in the world as any prince could have given to his best-beloved son. The only drawback,

indeed, that we can see in Burns's education, was its tendency to cultivate that excessive pride and sense of bitterness under obligation which was the grand stumbling-block of the peasant of those days. It cannot be called the weakness of any class now; yet we feel that the misery of wounded pride which attended indebtedness in the mind of the Scotch ploughman-farmer, and the morbid, passionate terror of shame which reigned in many such humble houses, was the weak point in their life, though it proceeded from very strength of character and integrity. But surely this was a failing which leant to virtue's side. The ease with which debt sits upon most people's shoulders now, and the readiness to take from all sources which is characteristic of modern civilisation, is a failing of an infinitely meaner kind; though the excess of virtue had its drawbacks too.

This, so far as we know, was the only principle in which his youth was trained which could be other than advantageous to the poet. We do not contest the advantages of academical training, but we doubt much whether, had William Burns been able to send his sons to college, and had Robert struggled into a poor Scotch student's hardly-won knowledge of classic and modern literature, it would have done him half as much good as his natural breeding in his father's cottage was calculated to do. It might, perhaps, and that is doubtful, have enriched us with some smoother epic, some tragedy of loftier plan; but the cottar's fireside would have remained voiceless, and the mouse and gowan of the Ayrshire fields would have perished like their predecessors, without one word of all that tender musing, that pathetic and most human philosophy, which has made them live for ever. Had we

the choice even of another Hamlet, we should pause ere we purchased it at such a cost. Nay, we would not pause; but with a quick decisive choice would hold out our hands towards the poet of the ploughed fields, and the wimpling burn, and the farm-steading. Shakespeare is: and praised be heaven no critic has it in his power to barter him for any classic piece of perfection observant of all the rules of art, as some critics would have gladly done little more than a century ago; but not even for a second Shakespeare could we let go our Burns. We refuse to believe that education would have mended him, or that the poet, had he been more than a ploughman, would have been a greater poet. We are much more ready to believe that the very reverse is the truth, and that if ever man was anointed and consecrated to a special work in this world, for which all his antecedents, all his training, all his surrounding circumstances combined to fit him, Robert Burns was that man. What was to blame was not his birth or breeding, but that monstrous fiction of conventional life which ordains that one sphere and one set of circumstances are essentially nobler than another, and that all who deserve well of their fellows should be forced upon one monotonous level of good society, whether it suits them or not, whether it is really better or not. This fiction is wide as the world, and old as the ancient ages; neither is there any possibility, so far as we are aware, of shaking its hold upon men: but, notwithstanding, it is false and evil; and to its injurious influence, and not to anything in the natural life of the poet, are his miseries, and, we believe, most of his sins, to be ascribed. What a pity, the world said, to permit such a man to remain in the inferior sphere where he was born! and accordingly every fool who wrote him-

self gentleman, and a hundred local nobodies, who were as mice—not only to Robert Burns, but to such men as his father and brother—“noticed” the poet, “raised” him to their level, impressed that foolish social lie, from the sway of which none of us entirely escape, upon his mind too, and spoiled the fit education, the noble training, which God and his home had given. By this he was, as a man, torn asunder, and ruined for this world; but faithful to his trust in the midst of all his misery, through heart-breaking, through tempest and convulsions, he held firm his commission as poet to the last. He held that post, as a soldier blind with wounds, and dizzy with the tumult of the fight, might hold fast the flag, the symbol of duty and honour, of country and cause. Whatever he lost besides, that he held high to the end. Through worlds of good advice from the wise, and siren whispers from voices more prevailing, and suggestions of ambition, and hints of profit, he stood by those colours. His faithfulness to his work made him wiser than the wise. He yielded, facile as a man—but as a poet he was immovable; and as a poet, though not as a man, he is safe for ever.

It seems almost needless to tell over again the old well-known tale; but it is so full of pity and wonder, of the beautiful and the tragic, that there are few histories of man more attractive. Robert Burns was born in January 1759, on the banks of the Doon, in a cottage built of clay by his father's own hands. The “blast of Januar’ wind” which “blew hansel in” upon the newborn, blew this humble little house about his baby ears at the very outset of his career. His mother was a woman of the country, peaceable, religious, and orderly; his father a man from the north, of a sterner and higher type of character. Robert

was the eldest of seven children, born to toil and to spare; to live hardly and honestly by the sweat of their brow; with no pretence beyond their station, and little hope of any advance out of it,—a most lowly, high-minded race, humble as the humblest, yet proud as the proudest, combining, in a way which few people understand nowadays, the most matter-of-fact and absolute poverty with a haughty and stern independence. In external circumstances they were scarcely better off than the villagers whose claims for Christmas coals and blankets is one of the chartered rights of English country life; but in mind they were haughty as the Doges, holding charity as poison, and debt as shame. This virtue of independence was the one only point in the family character which threatened to grow morbid. All the others were sweet and wholesome as the day. Never was there a more attractive picture than that of this peasant father among his children, in the midst of the ceaseless toil and care of their beginning of life. His first little farm was sterile and profitless; his second promised better, but even there ill-fortune overtook him in the shape of a doubtful lease and unkind landlord. His boys had to set to work as soon as their young strength permitted, and Robert had begun to do a man's work by the time he was fifteen. He and his brother Gilbert were sent to school as occasion served—for a few years regularly, and then, as they grew older, "week and week about," as they could be spared from the farm-work. When there was no possibility of schooling, "my father," says Gilbert Burns, "undertook to teach us arithmetic in the winter evenings, by candle-light; and in this way my two elder sisters received all the education they ever received." Of

these sisters nothing is ever told us, but the kindly mother moved but and ben while the fireside lessons were going on, and sang them songs in the gloaming; and a certain old Jenny, brimful of ghost stories and all the ballads of the country-side, frightened and charmed the lads with her endless lore. "Nothing could be more retired than our manner of living: we rarely saw anybody but the members of our own family. There were no boys of our own age or near it in the neighbourhood."

My father was for some time almost the only companion we had. He conversed familiarly on all subjects with us, as if we had been men, and was at great pains, while we accompanied him in the labours of the farm, to lead the conversation to such subjects as might tend to increase our knowledge or confirm us in virtuous habits. He borrowed Salmon's 'Geographical Grammar' for us, and endeavoured to make us acquainted with the situation and history of the different countries in the world; while from a book society in Ayr he procured for us the reading of Durham's 'Physics and Astro-Theology,' and Ray's 'Wisdom of God in Creation,' to give us some idea of astronomy and natural history. Robert read all these books with an avidity and industry scarcely to be equalled." Quaint and strange studies for the ploughboys in their winter evenings, gathered about the solitary candle, with the cheerful glow of the fire lighting up the one homely chamber, which was kitchen and parlour and hall—the croon of their mother's long low songs lingering in their ears, and their hearts still thrilling with old Jenny's wonders. Sometimes threatening letters would come from the factor—letters threatening roup and jail, no doubt, the two horrors of the poor, which "used to set us all in tears." Some-

times, however—a more agreeable interruption—friends would come from Ayr, to lighten this grave life with friendly talk; and on one occasion, of which there is a distinct record, the young dominie who had taught the boys came over to spend an evening in the smoky, cheery farm kitchen, where the slates and books were no doubt laid aside. He brought with him (of all things in the world) the tragedy of ‘Titus Andronicus’—“and by way of passing the evening he began to read the play aloud. We were all attention for some time, till presently the whole party was dissolved in tears. A female in the play (I have but a confused remembrance of it) had her hands chopped off, and her tongue cut out, and then was insultingly desired to call for water to wash her hands. At this, in an agony of distress, we with one voice desired he would read no more. My father observed, that if we would not hear it out, it would be needless to leave it with us. Robert replied, that if it was left he would burn it.” Bold critic, wise by nature! Is there not something in these scenes which the imagination lingers over more tenderly than if this boy’s education had been in the hands of scholars of endless learning? And then when the books were laid aside, and the porridge supped, and the homely yet hospitable table cleared, came the family service—the “*Let us worship God*,” which, in the confidential intercourse between the two brothers, Robert told Gilbert had always seemed to him the most solemn of utterances. A sketch of family life more pure, more true, or more touching, was never made.

But this existence, though so beautiful to look back upon now, was painful enough then. To the lads, who were confined within these bonds of toil, it seemed hard that they should have thus to labour

without ceasing, with little prospect of any outlet. “The cheerless gloom of a hermit, with the unceasing moil of a galley-slave,” says the poet, looking back upon it with a shudder from the heights of early fame, when he seemed to have got clear for ever of that grinding poverty. His brother is more moderate; but still with a deep gravity relates the story of their painful youth. “To the buffetings of misfortune,” he says, “we could only oppose hard labour and the most rigid economy. We lived very sparingly. For several years butcher’s meat was a stranger in the house; while all the members of the family exerted themselves to the utmost of their strength, and even beyond it, in the labours of the farm. My brother, at the age of thirteen, assisted in threshing the crops of corn; and at fifteen was the principal labourer on the farm, for we had no hired servant, male or female. The anguish of mind that we felt at our tender years under these straits and difficulties was very great. To think of our father now growing old (for he was above fifty), broken down with the long-continued fatigues of his life, with a wife and five other children, and in a declining state of circumstances, these reflections produced in my brother’s mind and mine sensations of the deepest distress.” But, nevertheless, the lads were young and capable of throwing over their deep distress whenever the factor’s letter, or some other immediate pinch of misery, was a few days, or perhaps a few hours off. At fifteen, Robert fell in love for the first time, with “a bonnie, sweet, sonsie lassie,” who was his partner in the harvest-field, following him close through the golden rig, as the manner was, binding, as he cut it, the rustling poppy-mingled grain. She “sang sweetly” a song “composed by a small country laird’s son on one of

his father's maids, with whom he was in love ;" and the dark, sunburnt, glowing boy, with the thrill of a new emotion stirring through him, ran into song too, moved by emulation and by all those dawning "thoughts, and passions, and delights," which are the ministers of love. "My Nelly's looks are blythe and sweet," sang the fifteen-year-old boy in his rapture, in the golden autumn sunshine among the golden corn. He is not much to be pitied after all. The scene is Arcadian in its tender innocence, lit up with a sweet glow of natural light and colour, but no heat of premature or unnatural passion. This little scene in the harvest-field balances with its sweet daylight the Rembrandt interior of the farmhouse kitchen and its copy-books. "Puirith cauld," such as "wracks the heart," and labours without ceasing ; but at the same time, warm, natural, hopeful, glowing life, and love, and song.

We need not linger to tell how he read Addison and Pope, in addition to the serious works above recorded ; how his boyish imagination was struck by the "Vision of Mirza," and his literary ambition aroused by the accidental acquisition of "a small collection of letters by the most eminent writers," which was bought by his uncle by mistake instead of the "Complete Letter-Writer," which he had intended to buy ;—for a lurking doubt afflicts us, whether Burns's letters might not have been more natural and agreeable had he never met with the compositions of these "eminent writers : " nor need we pause to say that he acquired some rudiments of French—an acquisition which his biographers rather insist upon, but which, we imagine, the readers of his correspondence will ruefully wish had never been attained. He also began the "Rudiments of the Latin

Tongue," but soon laid aside that uncongenial study. What is infinitely more important is, that he lived his toilsome life in innocence, in warm friendship with some companions of his own age, and chiefly with his admirable brother ; that he obeyed, and loved, and honoured, keeping faithfully in the narrow but noble track of duty which his father had trod before him, often sad and anxious, yet ever lighthearted, playing with the woes of life in a sweet unconsciousness of the deep innate happiness which lay beneath them, such as is natural to youth. How fine is his own description of this boyish innocent existence :—

"I mind it weel, in early date,
When I was beardless, young, and blate,
And first could thrash the barn,
Or haud a yokin' o' the plough,
An', though forfoughten sair enough,
Yet unco proud to learn."

What better sketch could be made of the "happy, weary" lad, "sair forfoughten," but proud and glad of his advance to his heritage, a man's work ? "He is hardly to be envied," says Mr Lockhart, "who can contemplate without emotion this exquisite picture of young nature and young genius."

This fresh and spotless youth outlasted all the early experiences of rural life, and retained its purity through all the picturesque and dangerous flirtations of the countryside. Into these flirtations it was evident he plunged with all the warmth of his impassioned nature. He "went owre the hills to Nannie," though the wastlin wind blew both rude and chill, and the day's darg had been hard and heavy. On "the Lammas night," when—

"The sky was blue, the wind was still,
The moon was shining clearly,"

he spent hours of happiness among "the rigs o' barley." Another "charmer" he invites on a clear evening, when "thick flies the

skimming swallow," to stray with him upon his "gladsome way,"—to see the beauty of nature—

"The rustling corn, the fruited thorn,
And every happy creature."

At another time the lady is unkind; and the little picture, fresh-breathing of dews and fields, surrounds one figure only in the fantastic depths of youthful despair:—

"The merry ploughboy cheers his team,
Wi' joy the tentie seedman stalks;
But life's to me a weary dream—
The dream o' ane that never wauks."

Every one of these bursts of song reveals to us the sweet country-side, with all its woods and streams, the tender silence of nature, the "happy living things" which the poet loves with all the natural warmth of a heart that opens wide its inmost doors to everything that lives, The lark which—

"Tween light and dark,
Blythe waukens by the daisy's side,"

is as visible to him as the shepherd that "o'er the moorland whistles shrill;" and all nature is populous to his universal sympathy. A man with such exuberance of tender thought and winning words was, as might be expected, welcome everywhere to the rustic maidens, to whom it was as sweet as to any princess to receive such tuneful homage. And the farmer of Lochlea's son was "a strappin' youth," well fitted to take any woman's eye. Dark eyes glowing with latent passion and fire ("I never saw such another eye in any human head," says Walter Scott, a tolerable judge); dark hair curling about his honest handsome forehead; a stalwart frame, not extravagant in height, but cast in the robustest mould; come of a creditable, honourable family; and endowed with a native wit which no one could deny, and a genial friendliness towards his fel-

low-creatures which few people could resist. Nature never set forth a more hopeful youth in the regions to which he belonged by birth and breeding. "I was generally a welcome guest wherever I visited," he says. "At the plough, scythe, or reaping-hook I feared no competitor, and thus I set absolute want at defiance." He was in the secret of half the loves in the parish of Tarbolton, and as proud of his knowledge "as ever was statesman in knowing the intrigues of half the courts in Europe." A prince could not have been more free, more favoured or well thought of; indeed he was in his sphere an absolute prince, "able to set want at defiance," which was all he required for independence, and cumbered with no artificial needs.

Thus Robert Burns lived till he was twenty-three. The anxieties which sometimes overwhelmed him were not for himself, but for his family, that his father's honourable name might be kept pure, and a roof kept over his old mother's head, and the household held together, which it had been old William Burns's aim and pride to keep together. He kept free of debt, which he held in purest terror, upon £7 a year, as his brother Gilbert testifies. Towards the end of this virtuous beginning of his life he went to Irvine to learn the trade of flax-dressing, and there lived upon porridge—on the oatmeal sent him from home—as many a farmer's son has done while wearing the academic gown. To this he was moved either by a desire so far to improve his position as to be able to marry; or possibly by the more serious thoughts suggested by an illness, which seems to be referred to in a very grave, and, indeed, pathetic letter, written in the end of 1781, in which he declares himself to find great comfort in the description of

heaven given in Revelation, and says that, "sometimes for an hour or two, when my spirits are a little lightened, I *glimmer* a little into futurity, but my principal, and, indeed, my only pleasurable employment, is looking backwards and forwards in a moral and religious way." He despairs, he says, "of ever making a figure in life"—a curious idea, one would suppose, to have so much as entered his mind. These utterances of youthful sadness must always, however, be taken with a large allowance for the feeling of the moment, and seldom represent anything more than temporary depression. And, poor fellow, he had been jilted, badly it would appear, from some letters in his correspondence of a high and splendid tone, much unlike the frank and fresh nature of his love-songs. This venture at Irvine ended in a fire, which consumed flax and tools, and left the young man without a sixpence. Its consequences were, however, still worse than pecuniary loss. The society of the little town corrupted the country lad. He heard immorality spoken of with levity, and probably was introduced to scenes of dissipation such as could scarcely be found in the parish of Tarbolton among the comrades who trusted him with their love-secrets. He returned home with the seeds of evil in him. But we are loath to leave this idyllic chapter, this genial and gracious youth. Amid its simple enjoyments there had been one which is curiously illustrative of the intellectual ambition which is natural to the Scotch peasant. When he was twenty-one, he, his brother, and five other young men, established a club in the village of Tarbolton for literary purposes. They were to meet once a-week in the village public-house; but lest the meeting should become an occa-

sion of dissipation, the expenditure of each member was not to exceed threepence on any one night. Their object was "to relax themselves after toil, to promote sociality and friendship, and to improve the mind." As was natural they debated social and sentimental subjects, "toasted their mistresses," and cultivated mutual friendship. They "found themselves so happy," says the *naïve* preamble to their rules, that after this club had existed for more than a year, they resolved to give a dance in its honour. "Accordingly we did meet, each one with a partner, and spent the evening in such innocence and merriment, such cheerfulness and good-humour, that every brother will long remember it with pleasure and delight." Such were the pleasures of the young rustics when left to themselves in their own sphere, without interference from their "betters." When Burns and his family removed to Moss-giel, near Mauchline, they originated a similar club there; and though Dr Currie, with his usual superiority, considers their choice of books to have been objectionable, as "being less calculated to increase the knowledge than to refine the taste"—a quality he evidently considered unnecessary in a peasant—yet it is probable the rural society knew better than its critic. We dwell upon these particulars not so much for their absolute importance to Burns's life, as to show how worthy and even noble were all its circumstances so long as it remained in its natural channel. The little Tarbolton club debated whether prudence or inclination should most be considered in marriage; but not for its edification was planned the "Holy Fair." It is connected with the "Epistle to Davie," a very different production, and with all the virtuous innocent thoughts, the simple

yet lofty impulses, the cheerful young philosophy of that pleasant poem. To his fellow-rustic it was thus the rustic poet wrote, with true hope and manful content, yet sparks of that indignation which young men feel at the inequalities of fortune:—

“What though, like commoners of air,
We wander out, we know not where,
But either house or hall?
Yet Nature’s charms, the hills and woods,
The sweeping vales, and foaming floods,
Are free alike to all.
In days when daisies deck the ground,
And blackbirds whistle clear,
With honest joy our hearts will bound
To see the coming year:
On braes, when we please, then,
We’ll sit an’ sowth a tune;
Synne rhyme till’t, we’ll time till’t,
And sing’t when we hae dune.

Then let us cheerfu’ acquiesce;
Nor make our scanty pleasures less,
By pining at our state;
And, even should misfortunes come,
I, here wha sit, hae met wi’ some,
An’s thankfu’ for them yet.
They gi’e the wit of age to youth;
They let us ken oursel’;
They make us see the naked truth,
The real guid and ill.
Though losses, and crosses,
Be lessons right severe,
There’s wit there, ye’ll get there,
Ye’ll find nae other where.”

These verses were repeated by the poet to his brother Gilbert in the summer of 1784, shortly after their father’s death, when they were working together at Mossiel, the new farm in which each member of the family had embarked all his or her possessions and labours, in the hope of being able to live and toil together. It was “in the interval of harder labour, when he and I were working in the garden (kail-yard).” “I believe,” adds Gilbert, “the first idea of Robert’s becoming an author was started on this occasion.” As they stooped among the kail, the one said to the other that the verses were good—as good as Allan Ramsay, sweetest praise to the author’s ting-

ling gratified ears, and that “they would bear being printed.” The writer and receiver of the letter and the critic were all “country lads.” These were the sentiments that naturally occurred to, and the style that pleased them. We shall see what was the different tone employed when the young farmer of Mossiel fell into the hands of his betters, and began to be petted, patronised, and taken notice of, to the great satisfaction of all his biographers and his own pleasure and pride.

The little town of Mauchline would seem then to have possessed a certain jovial society, true men of the time, such as have figured in many a reminiscence of the end of last century—men half-way between the rude and loud squires of Fielding and the jovial lawyers of Scott, with that smack of free-thinking which belonged to their special generation, as well as of the free living which was characteristic of the class up to a comparatively recent period. Even yet the character has not sufficiently died out of Scotland to require much stretch of memory to identify it. The “writer,” who held one of the highest places in the little half-town half-village society, was probably a younger son of a laird, or possessed at least some family connection or standing-ground in the neighbourhood. By this right of family he was set free from all the bonds which restrain men who have their character and position to make; and his education, his coarse wit, the familiarity which he was free to indulge in with the common people, aware that it would never lessen the importance which was derived not from himself but from his family—a familiarity which hid infinite rude arrogance behind its convivial good-fellowship—earned him the superficial suffrages of the unthinking multi-

tude. His natural inclination to rude and riotous scepticism was blown to a certain polemical heat by the events and commotions of the time, and he had it in his power to be irreligious at once and immoral, to drink and swear, and sneer and roar in boisterous merriment, at every thing that pretended to goodness or purity, without losing his right to be considered a gentleman. He united the vices of the rough-riding squire to those of the professional man of the town; and but for a certain wild cleverness and good-nature, had very few redeeming qualities about him. Such was the kind of man who was the aristocrat of the little Ayrshire burghs. Sometimes he was the doctor, sometimes the writer, sometimes even, softened down a little and put into a more respectable garb, he became the parish minister, and drank, and laughed, and made questionable jokes with the best.

It was into the hands of this fashion of man that Robert Burns, farmer at Mossgiel, who had already begun to write "Robert Burns, poet," across the pages of his scrap-books, fell. It was a "rise in life" for the ambitious ploughman. This wild, rude, boisterous society was the society of gentlemen. The young man was dazzled by the new light that thus shone upon him. Men who were the equals of all the lairds and lords in the country-side made him their equal. Their accent a little finer than his own, the mass of additional books which probably they had read, their superior power of expressing themselves, their possession of that gift of education which is the god of the poor Scotchman, made his admission to their company like entrance into Elysium. They were his betters; it was the natural reward of his superior genius to be admitted among them; his hopes could not have reached so far had not Poetry opened the tavern

door, or the more difficult parlour, and admitted him to make sport for the gentlemen. And he was young, and had that glamour in his eyes which confers nobleness and beauty on all it looks on. Thus he who had lived all his life among the wholesome fields, and had begun to sing of them in soft delightful strains, fresh as the very voice of nature, was dragged into another atmosphere, an air laden with fumes of toddy, and hot with the excitement of local squabbles—squabbles which were not even confined to the ground of politics, but which raged in that field where vituperation is always the loudest, and temper the highest, and levity most profane—the field of religious contention. And when we add that our Burns, the first great, truly national, poet of Scotland, began his public career with a string of verses in which bad taste and profane meaning have not even wit or fun to veil them, or the headlong race of poetic excitement to excuse them, we say in a word all that his introduction to better society, his admission to a higher class, his contact with men of education and family, did for him. From the "Epistle to Davie" to the "Twa Herds," what an inconceivable downfall! The first full of all the tranquil sweetness of nature, the sober yet ever pleasant and cheerful light of morning, before misfortune had become personal, or individual passion or anguish had disturbed the early daylight—a poem gently intelligible to all men, wide as humanity and poetry and all-compensating youth; the other a miserable local squib, requiring pages of explanation, filled with strange names of persons we know nothing about, bristling with allusions that are lost upon us, and possessing no zest or flavour except to those who understood all the temporary commotions of the country-side. How, with this curious

contrast before them, people can still complain that Burns was not sufficiently noticed by the higher classes in his neighbourhood, and that it would have been salvation to him had he shared their education and breeding, instead of that of his father's cottage, we are unable to conceive. Would to heaven that his betters had left the poet alone!—that they had left him to school-master Davie and ploughman Gilbert, to his peasant society, to his musings afoot and afield, and not dragged him into their miserable and petty circles, their profane polemics, their coarse village disputes and personalities! This was what they did for the young soul coming fresh out of God's hands (though already, God forgive him! soiled with stains of the earth). And were it not that we have no right to judge individuals, and that the men are dead and have had their reckoning, we protest we should be disposed in good faith to endorse Holy Willie's profane petitions, so far as those "patrons" of Burns's youth—those "gentlemen" of whose friendship the ploughman was so proud—are concerned.

And to our own mind all the sad secret of the poet's life, the problem which it is so hard to read, is contained herein. He was nobly qualified, nobly trained for his true office, which lay among that class broadly and naturally entitled "the common people,"—the same who crowded the hillsides and clustered about the shores of the Lake in Galilee, listening—when their betters did not care to listen. Burns was their born exponent in his day, their minstrel, their prophet; but the moment his head appeared above the level, and those frank fervid eyes, aglow with the poet's passion of surprised delight in the newness and loveliness of all he saw, the world beheld, stared, wondered, and

asked itself what to do! This strange apparition was like an unexpected visitor at the door. Of course he had to be admitted somehow. The conventional superstition which is just strong enough to keep common minds in awe, and extort those ceremonial observances which superstition finds refuge in, of respect to genius—made it inevitable that when once the man became visible, he should be made to mount up higher, at least for the moment, and to sit down at the master's table. And the young man went up with his glowing eyes, expecting to find everything there that imagination paints of noble and graceful and refined—and found a flutter of small-talk, the gossip of a clique, the cleverness of local malice, instead of that feast of reason and flow of soul which fancy had looked for. But fancy is strong, and would not let him believe all that in the first shock he must have felt, of bewildered disappointment and amaze. The impulse of pride and pleasure with which he had come, carried him on to a certain gratification in being thus, as it were, made one of the clique, and initiated into all their personal hatreds and jocular enmities; till at last, in his perfectly real yet fictitious enthusiasm, he lifted the clear voice, given him for so much nobler purpose, to sing to the confusion of his patrons' adversaries, adding sharp darts of his own to the vulgar gibe and coarse badinage, which was not his, poor boy, nor ever would have entered his soul. Mightily pleased, no doubt, were the patrons with this celestial slave they had gotten, this Samson whom they poked in his big ribs, and made to stretch out his muscles for their admiration—till the moment came when they had enough of him, and required no more. This natural inevitable process ruined Burns's

life, and broke his heart; and it seemed for one terrible moment as if it might ruin his work too. But happily genius has better guards than those that fall to the lot of mere humanity, and the poet broke his bondage; the poet—but not the man.

When we state our conviction that this was his curse and the secret of his ruin, we do not pretend to say that we can see how it could have been avoided. It might have been avoided indeed, had the so-called superior classes been really superior, greater in mind, purer in moral tone, and possessed with a fuller appreciation of real truth and beauty than their humbler neighbours. But they were not so; and we dare not assert that they are so now, or ever will be until the end of time. Equality is a miserable fiction as between man and man, but as between class and class it is a truth which no thoughtful mind, we think, can dispute. The levels of humanity are extraordinarily like each other—as like as rivers are, or mountains, or any other species. There are differences in accent, differences in phraseology, immense differences in costume and aspect; but the biggest metropolitan society resembles the cliques of a village with a perfectly appalling likeness. Yet it is the common sentiment, the instinct of the world, that the worth which makes a man illustrious on one level should raise him to another; and hoisted up he must be accordingly, though we know he will gain nothing by it, and may lose much. We cannot resist this natural impulse, this doctrine of social reward for everything that is supremely excellent. Bad as it often is in its results, it would be worse still if the world were destitute of it, if society were so indifferent to genius as not even to gape and stare. The principle must be accepted and

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even encouraged for the good of the universe; but yet what pain, what trouble, what terrible possibilities of ruin do we lay up for our lowly men of genius by accepting it! We lay up for them the certainty of getting tinsel for gold; of having the false so presented to them that they will accept it for a time as true; of receiving flattery which is more contemptuous than scorn, and commendation which is more insulting than insolence; and of finally dropping back into their native sphere, disgusted, disenchanted, sore, and wroth, with the beauty gone out of everything, and no further possibility in their minds of believing in excellence or generosity. It happened in Burns's day that the humbler level from which he was raised was infinitely better and purer than, at least, the next step of the social scale—which made the process yet more fatal to him than it might have been; and still we do not see how it could have been helped. Should another Burns arise now, we do not even know how we could profit by past experience, and avoid the danger for him. Did we neglect him or allow him to be neglected, it would be a bitter wrong and shame to humanity; while in "noticing," in "elevating," we incur the awful risk of ruining. We cannot even suggest how the difficulty is to be got over—but in our hearts we believe it was his friendly Gavin Hamiltons with their "takin' arts," his "glib-tongued Aikens," his good-natured, admiring, coarse, and commonplace patrons, and not his own education or want of education, which injured Burns's life and broke his heart.

The "Twa Herds" was not the only local and polemical satire produced by the unfortunate introduction of the poet into this new sphere. The "Kirk's Alarm" and "The Ordination" followed; all of which, we

are bold to say, would be gladly left out of any future edition of Burns by all who esteem him as he ought to be esteemed. They are the sort of verses which would naturally be produced by the coarse and clever poet of a village, the man whose personal satires are always received by his limited circle with "a roar of applause," until somebody who knows better happens to see them, and makes the whole gaping audience at once ashamed of itself. We know no reason why they should have been retained in print so long, for they are neither brilliant nor melodious, but petty, foolish, and vulgar to an almost incredible extent. "Holy Willie's Prayer" is quite different. It is equally, or indeed more profane, but it is pure satire, strong and trenchant, awful even in its vivid reality. This tremendous sketch wants no explanatory notes, no foolish disguise of initials. The man stands out before us in a blaze of infernal light, a being whose existence we can neither doubt nor deny. We are not sure even that we can regret the profane inspiration which turned the poet's eye upon such a figure, for its truth and power redeem its profanity. It may be laughable to the shallow reader, but it is appalling to the thoughtful; and no virtuous prejudice should be allowed to interfere with the place which it has gained by sheer vigour, power, and truth. "The Holy Fair" is not so grand; but yet in it the poet has asserted himself as a poet. The profanity is less excusable in this than in "Holy Willie," which stands altogether on higher ground; it is a kind of profanity, too, of which William Burns's son never could have been guilty in his father's lifetime, and which probably, had any true voice suggested it to him, the still ingenuous young man would have blushed for with overwhelming shame; but still it

is poetry, and full of animation and melodious vigour, and that reality of rural feeling which he knew so well. We regret that he should have treated the subject in such a way: but we cannot condemn.

The two years he spent at Moss-giel, however—though his habits seem to have lost their first purity, and some real stains (stains which we have no doubt have been much exaggerated) had crept upon his name—were the richest and most poetic of his life. He wrote most of his finest poems in this chilly farmhouse, the "auld clay biggin'," where, as he sat and eyed the smoke which filled the air with a "mottie, misty" haze, the vision of Coila, blushing "sweet, like modest worth," with her "wildly witty, rustic grace" and her illuminated mantle, "stepped ben," stopping the rash vow which he was about to make, to rhyme no more. Rich and beautiful, and happy and sad, were these years. Affairs went but badly with the brothers, yet with manful modest souls they laboured at their day's work, sweetening it with such communion by the common roads and laborious fields as falls to the lot of very few. We have already instanced the poem communicated to Gilbert's brotherly ears, while the two were weeding in the kail-yard. The days and the places where such communications were made to him he remembered ever after with proud and tender faithfulness. Once when the two were "going together with carts for coal to the family (and I could yet point out the particular spot), the author first repeated to me the "Address to the Deil." Another poem he heard of "as I was holding the plough, and he was letting the water off the field beside me." The "Cottar's Saturday Night" was made known to him first on a Sunday afternoon walk—a pleasant moment of intercourse which the

brothers often enjoyed together—and Gilbert was “electrified,” as well he might be. A more effectual reply to the ordinary delusion that unbounded leisure and ease are necessary for the production of poetry could scarcely be given; for in these two years Burns was labouring not less but harder than an ordinary ploughman—as a man works on his own land, knowing that every prospect in life depends upon his exertions. He worked, and he courted, and he feasted, and yet found time, notwithstanding, for such a joyous, torrent of poetry—warm, full, and strong, instinct with life, and full of the delightful ease of inspiration—as the most industrious poet by trade we have ever heard of could not have produced in the time. This stream of song included sketches of life and character which have lit up all Scotland; soft friendly outbursts of humour, and genial poetic laughter as sweet as silver bells; and, mingled with these, such tender rural philosophies, such pathetic thoughtfulness, pity, and charity as go direct to the heart. It was his very climax of life. Every influence round him entered into his soul. Its doors stood open day and night ready to receive everything that was weak and wanted succour, and ready to be moved by everything that was lovely and noble. In all the world there was not a created thing which he shut out from his sympathy: from the “cowering beastie” in the fields, to auld Nickie-ben in “yon lowin’ heugh”—he felt for all. He is like a god in his tender thought, in his yearning for their welfare. When he wakes by night and hears the storm shake the walls of the clay cottage, he does not hug himself upon his individual warmth and comfort like common men—

“List’ning the doors and windows rattle,
I thought me on the ourie cattle,

Or silly sheep, wha bide this brattle
O’ winter war,
And through the drift, deep-lairing
sprattle,

Beneath a scaur.

Ilk happing bird, wee, helpless thing,
That in the merry month o’ spring
Delighted me to hear thee sing,

What’s come o’ thee?

Where wilt thou cower thy chattering
wing,

An’ close thy e’e!”

When morning comes, however, the young poet shakes off his coil of painful, pitiful thought, as chanticler “shakes off the pouthery snaw.” He, too, “hails the morning with a cheer.” The toil and moil may sometimes swell a poetic sigh; but Burns is not afraid of them, nor moved by them. In the evening as he comes home, a tipsy neighbour, fallen by the roadside, catches his eye; and moved with whimsical indulgent humour, he sits down on the low wall of the brig, and with laughter shining in his eyes, summons up before him the devious progress of the fallen hero:—

“The clachan yill had made me canty,
I wasna fou, but just had plenty;
I stachered whyles, but yet took tent aye

To free the ditches;

An’ hillocks, stanes, and bushes kenned
aye

Fræ ghaists an’ witches.

The rising moon began to glower
The distant Cumnock hills out-owre;
To count her horns, wi’ a’ my power,

I set mysel’;

But whether she had three or four,
I couldna tell.”

Again, another whimsy seizes him. He will sing of “Scotch Drink,” traditional *vin du pays*, the sadly misnamed water of life in northern lands. With ideal fervour he depicts its potency; ideal, for as yet, at least, no respectable peasant in Kyle or Carrick is more sober than “rantin’, rovin’ Robin.” He shows us how the “brawny, bainie, ploughman chiel” makes the glowing darksome smithy ring “wi’ dinsome cla-

mour," and "Burnewin comes on like death," after the jovial dram. Even here there comes in a touch of kindly pathos—the glimmer of the incipient tear beyond the bright eye's genial laughter, as he describes how the drink he celebrates "erects its head" sometimes among the gentle:—

"But humbly kind in time o' need,
The poor man's wine,
His wee drap parritch, or his bread,
Thou kitchens fine."

The subjects are so much alike that we may almost say it is in the same poem that one of the most brilliant and animated battle-sketches ever made comes in. The Scotch reader foresees at once to what verses we refer. They are those in which the poet, in the rush and flow of his song, seizes by chance, as it were, upon a soldier on the field, and paints him full length, with the suddenness of a photograph, but in a glory of colour and life which puts all such ghostly painting to shame:—

"Bring a Scotsman from his hill,
Clap in his cheek a Highland gill,
Say, such is royal George's will,
An' there's the foe,
He has nae thought but how to kill
Twa at a blow."

Nae could faint-hearted doubtings tease him;
Death comes—wi' fearless eye he sees him;
Wi' bluidy hand a welcome gies him;
An' when he fa's,
His latest draught o' breathin' lea'es him
In faint huzzas!"

Was there ever a more splendid, animated, living picture? The "Highland gill," after all, has very little to do with it; but he whom no faint-hearted doubtings assail—whose rush of fervid valour is limited only by the thought how best to kill twa at a blow—who breathes out in the face of death his faint huzzas,—what a vision, rapid as the lightning, plucked out of the very heart of battle! In those days the British Isles was a

fighting country, prompt to take offence, and ready to resent—interfering in every man's affairs; and the reader of that period knew how true was the description. Homer himself could not be more nervous, more curtly powerful, or move us with a deeper roll and rush of heroic emotion. Thus the young ploughman sweeps on, playing upon his readers' hearts as upon a magical instrument, now rolling deep in thunderous swells of feeling, now breathing a sweetness akin to tears. It is impossible to follow him through all those manifold notes, through this flood of harmony at once exciting and soothing, without the warmest sympathy. We know these poems half by heart. Yet when we read them over again they are all as fresh as ever, as radiant with life as if they had been printed yesterday. We change, as the poet bids us, and are grave and gay, and laugh and weep like so many fools, without pause or intermission, while we turn from page to page. Where did he get this heavenly gift? But anyhow, he exercised it while ploughing and reaping, and leading coals along the country roads, and draining the clayey barren fields. Shall we say such a wonder never was? At least it has been as rare as became a miracle.

And does not the reader see how, as these poems grew and breathed into being, the veil of the unknown was lifted, and all Lowland Scotland, sweet and cheery, came to light, as when the sun rises over an unseen land? Some one, we forget at this moment whom, has directed attention lately to the place Scotland held in fiction and poetry before Burns and Scott were. Even Smollett, a Scotsman, dared say very little for his country. It was a land of sour fanatics, of penurious misers, of mean bowing and scraping, of servile acts of all kinds—a

country which all its sons forsook as soon as possible, to pinch and scrape a living out of English prodigality, and to promote their raw-boned countrymen over the honest Saxon, who was no match for their grovelling cunning. This was the best that was said for us on the other side of the Tweed. The extraordinary revolution of sentiment since is due entirely to the two poets whose mission in very different ways was to make their country known. Burns was the first, and in some points he was very much the greatest. His revelation was deeper, stronger, more original than that of the other. It reached lower down, revealing almost more than one nationality in the warm and tender light by which it made Scotland visible—for he made the poor visible at the same time, the common people, the universal basis of society. Hard must that man's heart have been, and opaque his intellect, who, after reading the "Cottar's Saturday Night," could have looked with unchanged eyes upon a cottage anywhere. Scotland was the first object of the revelation—but after, all the world.

"At length his lonely cot appears in view,
Beneath the shelter of an aged tree.
Th' expectant *wee things*, toddlin', stacher
through

To meet their dad, wi' flichterin' noise
an' glee.

His wee bit ingle, blinkin' bonnily,

His clean hearthstane, his thriftie *wife's*
smile,

The lispin' infant prattling on his knee,

Does a' his weary carking cares beguile,
An' makes him quite forget his labour an'
his toil.

Belyve, the elder bairns come drapping in,
At service out, amang the farmers
roun' ;

Some ca' the pleugh, some herd, some
tentie rin

A cannie errand to a neebor town :

Their eldest hope, their *Jenny*, woman
grown,

In youthfu' bloom, love sparkling in
her e'e,

Comes hame, perhaps, to show a braw
new gown,
Or deposit her sair-won penny-fee,
To help her parents dear, if they in hard-
ship be.

Wi' joy unfeigned, brothers and sisters
meet,

An' each for other's weelfare kindly
spiers ;

The social hours, swift-winged, unnoticed,
fleet :

Each tells the uncos that he sees or
hears ;

The parents, partial, eye their hopeful
years ;

Anticipation forward points the view.

The mother, wi' her needle an' her shears,
Gars auld claes look amaisht as weel's
the new ;

The father mixes a' wi' admonition due.

The cheerfu' supper done, wi' serious face,
They round the ingle form a circle
wide ;

The sire turns o'er, wi' patriarchal grace,
The big *ha'-Bible*, ance his father's pride :

His bonnet reverently is laid aside,

His lyart haffets wearing thin an' bare ;
Those strains that once did sweet in
Zion glide,

He wales a portion with judicious care ;
And '*Let us worship God*,' he says, with
solemn air."

All this astonishing work, or at least the greater part of it, was done, as we have said, in two years ; and these most laborious, most anxious years, in which the poet did no more than "set want at defiance," and in which he had to maintain a continual conflict with fate, for the sake of all those additions which the simplest civilisation must add to the wants of nature. To pay their rent, to keep the roof over their heads and their mother's head, to preserve the humble independence of men who were their own masters, and not hired servants, the brothers struggled, sometimes with failing, sometimes with courageous hearts. During this period Robert met and loved and lost his Highland Mary, the most spotless of all his loves. The little that we know of her is all tender, pure, and sweet. Her lover celebrated the house in which

she was a humble maid-servant, in strains as passionate and reverent as ever knight of romance sang to his lady; and one of the sweetest pathetic love-partings recorded in the national mythology is that in which these two, with tears, and thoughts too deep for tears, exchanged their troth, holding each other's hands across the burn which wimpled between them. "Thou shall not forswear thyself, but perform unto the Lord thy oath," the poet wrote afterwards in his Mary's Bible, that grand and simple register of all great incidents in the lives of the poor. But death met Mary on her way, and compelled her to forswear herself. There is no record as to how he bore this blow. His early biographers were all too busy finding out how he was condescended to by the gentlemen, and how many fine houses he was asked to dine at, to have eyes or ears for such humble matters. And the next incident in Burns's career which comes clearly before us is one which connects him with the name of Jean Armour—never thereafter to be separated from his.

The story of his connection with Jean is one which it is most distasteful to tell. Professor Wilson is justly indignant with the impertinent freedom of biographers who ventured to discuss in her lifetime whether her husband had loved her or not, and whether or not she was the occasion of all his misfortunes. It was fit that one of the most generous and manful of critics should have made this protest; but yet it is impossible to exonerate Mrs Burns from blame. There can be no doubt that her facility and that easy-minded persuadableness, to use the mildest of terms, which made her give him up when not only his peace of mind, but her own honour, was concerned, procured for the man who was so faithful to her the

severest trial of his life, and inflicted such pain upon him as nothing else could have done.

We need not enter into this miserable story, which is sufficiently well known, further than to say that Jean's parents destroyed, with her consent, the "marriage-lines" which made her Burns's lawful wife very shortly before the birth of her first child. Why the father and mother should have thus chosen disgrace for their daughter is one of the utterly unexplainable mysteries which occur sometimes in the most ordinary life: but when one reflects that but for this piece of monstrous and unintelligible folly, Burns's wife might have taken her place in the world as a spotless matron, no one, except perhaps some keen-sighted Mauchline gossip, being any the wiser, and the poet himself have been spared the deepest affliction of his life, and a stigma which never has been quite removed from him, it is hardly possible to refrain from a certain bitterness of denunciation. The Armours destroyed the marriage-lines, thus unmarried the pair; rejected all Burns's overtures; and then, last insult and injury, raised proceedings against him in order to compel him to give security for the maintenance of a child which he was not to be allowed to claim as legitimately his. The despair into which he was plunged by these proceedings seems to us to acquit Burns of all the oft-repeated accusations of profligacy which have been brought against him. His own design had been to go to Jamaica (a scheme which long had hovered in his brain), to work there for his wife's support; but he now offered to stay at home, to hire himself out as a farm-servant—a descent in the world which, though apparently small, was great at that level, but which was refused like all the rest. It is impossible that

a man who was ready to put his sincerity to such a test, whose attempt to right the wrong he had done was thus voluntary and unforced, and who was capable of the sentiments expressed in the "Lament," could be a vulgar seducer, a village profligate conversant with such adventures. The *promised father's tender name* would have been terrible and not sweet to such an ordinary villain; and the chances are that such a man would have congratulated himself on the good fortune of his escape, rather than broken his heart over the failure of his hopes.

Never was there sufferer more deeply to be pitied than the unfortunate young man who had thus been suddenly brought to a stop in the fulness of his youthful career. It is as if a ship in full sail, reckless with the security of good weather and past prosperity, had been suddenly caught by a hurricane and dashed against some unsuspected rock. Bitter mortification, wounded love and pride, the sense of a sacrifice offered in vain, and of personal rejection and contumely, mingled with all his external miseries. He was unable to give the security required. "I suppose," says Mr Lockhart, "security for some four or five pounds a-year was the utmost that could have been demanded from a person in his rank: but the man who had in his desk the immortal poems to which we have been referring, either disdained to ask, or tried in vain to find, pecuniary assistance in his time of need." Probably the former was the true state of the case, for borrowing was horrible to him. That terrible bugbear "a jail," a spectre which haunted him to his dying day with an almost childish terror, seemed now to open its gloomy doors at his very side. The only thing to save him was flight. And to fly, accord-

ingly, he made up his mind. The prosecution raised by the Armours drove him into hiding. He "skulked from cover to cover" as he himself describes it, miserable, shame-stricken, almost in despair. Even when a situation was procured for him on the estate of a Dr Douglas in Jamaica, as under-overseer, he had not money enough (nine pounds) to pay his passage. It was in this emergency that he bethought himself of publishing his poems, or, more likely, had that expedient suggested to him by his friends. They had become tolerably known in the local world by this time; and everybody who knew Burns took in hand to get subscribers. The hope of a little profit in the matter scarcely seems, we think, to have bulked very largely with Burns himself. Another idea was foremost in his mind. Had he left the country as he felt himself forced to do at that miserable crisis, he would have left it in disgrace—a man shamed, hunted away from his native shores, rejected under the most aggravating circumstances by the woman whom he loved. At such a dismal moment it was natural that there should rise in his heart a desire to redeem his name as far as was possible. "It was a delicious idea," he says, in the narrative of his early life which he addressed to Dr Moore, not much more than a year after, and in which a certain levity of tone scarcely veils the recent wounds, "that I should be called a clever fellow, even though it should never reach my ears." "It is just the last foolish action I intend to do," he writes in June 1786, to a friend with whom no forced feeling was necessary, a shoemaker in Glasgow, "and then turn a wise man as soon as possible." With this motive he drew forth those homely writing-books and scraps of manuscript on which were

written the verses which would at that moment have been a greater loss to the world than the Crown jewels, and took them to an obscure Kilmarnock printer. Thus humbly stole into the world the last farewell to his country of a young man ruined and wretched—a volume which made more commotion in the world of literature than perhaps any one volume has made since. Never was there a humbler entry upon any stage; and few *débutants* have been so heavy-hearted. He was still in hiding, living about in the houses of his friends, when the volume appeared. Either its immediate success must have cowed those strange enemies who were, so to speak, of his own house, or his improving prospects disarmed them; for as the book sold he seems to have lingered, making new friends, and appearing at well-known houses in a way scarcely practicable to a hunted man. Dugald Stewart, with condescension so gracious and amiable that it seems cruel to call it by that disagreeable name, but which still was condescension, though most delicately veiled, had him to his house of Catrine, where he even “dinner’d with a lord” on an occasion which he celebrates with much fun and glee. He formed the acquaintance, besides, of Mrs Stewart of Stair, and of Mrs Dunlop of Dunlop, afterwards his steady friend and constant correspondent; and perhaps with some hopes raised by the very names of these great people—hopes of an exciseman’s place, which already tempted him, among others—he lingered through the autumn, ever reluctant to tear himself from his home. But no help came from any of his patrons; and the poems had produced twenty pounds. With this he secured a passage in a ship from Greenock, and even sent off his chest containing all his humble possessions. It

was on a gloomy autumn night that he left the manse of Loudoun, where he had gone to take leave of the minister, Dr Lauria, a friend who was exerting himself busily though secretly on the poet’s behalf; and gloomier still were his confused and melancholy thoughts. As he strode over the dreary moorland in the cloudy gloaming, hope forsook the young man thus “abandoned, exiled, and forlorn.” Tears came to his eyes, and the familiar language of song to his lips. “Farewell,” he said, with all the bitterness of the parting swelling over him—

“Farewell auld Coila’s hills and dales,
Her heathy moors and winding vales;
The scenes where wretched fancy roves,
Pursuing past unhappy loves!
Farewell my friends, farewell my foes!
My peace with these—my love with those;
The bursting tears my heart declare:
Farewell the bonnie banks of Ayr!”

This was the very darkest moment before the dawn. He had scarcely gone from Loudoun Manse when a letter arrived there from Dr Blacklock in Edinburgh, a letter which the kind minister had been hoping for, which seems to have raised Burns at once from the depths of despondency to immediate and brilliant hope, though it contained nothing but warm praise and encouragement, and urgent advice that another edition of the poems should be published. So in place of going to Jamaica, the poet, no longer despairing, went off to Edinburgh, and all his life changed like the shifting of a scene in a theatre. The first portion was over, and many scenes completed; but now another fyte of the eventful history was to begin.

The next chapter in Burns’s life is a very curious one; but it was not of the importance which by all rules of likelihood it ought to have been. He went among the “first circles” of Edinburgh without perturbation, without enthusiasm, with

a calm which utterly and with reason perplexed all his learned and witty and refined entertainers. The secret of this calm lay, no doubt, in the fact that he had been already disenchanted. He had found out what society was from his Mauchline experiences, being "quick to learn and wise to know" as ever man was. He had found out that gentlemen were like nothing in this world so much as ploughmen—that the entertainments of the fine people, or at least those "writers' feasts" with which he was most conversant, were, with a few differences in manner, as like as two peas to the peasant carouses in alehouse kitchens. Nay, there would even seem in his utter silence about it a kind of suggestion that Burns found in the revels at Poesie Nansie's the rudimental germ from which the whole sprang, with different degrees, no doubt, of decency and politeness, but little that was fundamentally greater. The ploughmen were like the beggars, and the writers like the ploughmen, and the lords and philosophers like the writers; and nowhere were there any demi-gods, any Society, high-seated on the topmost rank of humanity, such as Olympus might have stooped to, such as a man might be proud to rise to. For such a society a poet might have borne even to be patronised; but he had learned that it was not to be found.

Thus there was no illusion in the eyes with which he looked out, gentle but stern, upon society in Edinburgh. Already he had found that siren out, and she could no longer delude, no more excite him. This painful enlightenment is visible through all that follows. He is never enthusiastic, never carried away, always on his guard. He does not plunge into the new world with a neophyte's generous all-belief

and foolish admiration, but approaches it gravely, holding his peasant head high, penetrated by the discovery that one rank is no better than another, and that one monotonous line of limitation is to be found in all. Had he been transported out of himself, dazzled by his new associations, it would have been more natural, and, perhaps, notwithstanding all that must have followed, it might have been better for him. But the wonder remarked by all was that Burns was never dazzled. He held his head perhaps even a little rigid in his sad determination not to be again deceived, seeing with clear eyes, through all the homage paid him, that delicatest insolence of wonder that the ploughman should hold his own so calmly—that softest, kindest consciousness of his inferiority which ran beneath all the sparkling stream of admiration and adulation. The Ayrshire Ploughman!—he was so distinguished in print and in talk, delicately labelled in society, so that no man might fail to perceive what special claims he had on the forbearance of the gentlefolks; but it was disappointing to them to find no need for forbearance. Never was a more curious scene. His patrons described him, discussed him, wondered at him, without quite perceiving—though some of them, we think, had an uneasy consciousness of it—that he saw through them all, and had fuller command of the position than they had. But, we repeat, it would probably have been better for him had he been without that painful enlightenment, had he been able to throw himself into the new world with enthusiasm, to be dazzled and have his head turned. The awakening, no doubt, would have been bitter, but still he would have had the sweeter flavour of the best kind of social condescending adulation, instead of the worst kind, which he

had once received with enthusiasm, and the tasting of which had made him as the gods, seeing good and evil. But that was past praying for. And Burns passed through this Edinburgh chapter without either good or harm to speak of, wondered at, gazed at, applauded, considered everywhere the first of miracles and lions; but like a man in a strange country, holding himself separate and apart, with an almost coldness quite foreign to his nature. Among women the case was otherwise. He is said to have made the somewhat curious remark, that whereas he had met with men in his own class as wise, as excellent, as thoughtful and high-minded as any he had met in the higher circles, yet that an accomplished woman was a being altogether new to him. We have doubts whether Burns ever said, or saying, meant this. But such an idea is not necessary to explain his greater enthusiasm and warmth among ladies. Notwithstanding all his rustic adventures, it is clear that a certain chivalry of feeling towards women existed in him always, and the gentle condescension of a lady had nothing unpalatable in it to so many a man. Is not every woman every man's superior by the gentle laws of chivalry, and that visionary courtesy which is at once the root and the finest blossom of good manners? It takes nothing from a man's manhood to defer to a woman, to accept whatever grace she gives as if it came from an eminence of nature, to assume a certain noble inferiority. This it is, perhaps, which makes such a man always more at his ease, always seen to better advantage, and even almost always better understood, by the women socially superior to him than by the men.

On the whole, however, Burns made more impression on Edinburgh than Edinburgh made on Burns.

The witty city, so full of intellect and so conscious of her powers, was startled by this strange apparition. She grew serious and silent, and stared with a deeper meaning than generally animates the stare even of an intellectual crowd, at this man who refused to have his head turned. He talked with the best of her conversationalists, had opinions, extraordinary to say, about everything, and was neither proud nor ashamed of the fact that he was an Ayrshire ploughman. Strange, unintelligible, puzzling apparition! He came and went, and disappeared and was seen no more; and Edinburgh, which had received something of a shock from this peasant Mordecai, who gazed at her pageants in silence, and would not applaud, took a little comfort in whispering stories about him—how he had friends, Ayrshire tradesfolk and the like, in humble streets, who were more congenial society for him than the wits and the gentlemen; and how he caroused in these unknown haunts, and spent his time in drinking, and was of anything but a satisfactory character. This was a kind of comfort—though she shook her head and professed to be very sorry—to the injured complacency of the intellectual city.

The most charming reminiscence which dwells in our minds of this Edinburgh visit may be found in Dugald Stewart's description of the poet. "I recollect once he told me," says the Professor, "when I was admiring a distant prospect in one of our morning walks, that the sight of so many smoking cottages gave a pleasure to his mind which none could understand who had not witnessed, like himself, the happiness and the worth they contained." These dozen words, falling upon us all at once, surprise the tears to our eyes. What loyalty, what tender thoughtfulness, what faithful love of

his own, breathe out of them ! The wise men had been praying him, almost on their knees, to write a tragedy, to abandon the Scottish tongue—a barbarous dialect, which kept him in bondage—and to become a correct and refined English poet. And Burns, one can fancy, with a smile on his lips, had played with the idea, perhaps sincerely by moments, with a touch of gratified vanity at the notion that all styles were possible to him—for we find him talking vaguely and finely of the advantage it is to a poet to be able to study life in its full tide ; and he went so far as to buy a notebook (never used, heaven be praised !) “to take down his remarks on the spot” of the different new characters he saw. But when he went out beyond the streets, with their studies of character, and saw the hills of Braid rising soft into the morning sunshine, and the smoke floating upward from the cottages, a sudden sweet revulsion came to him. His mission and true work returned like a dove fluttering from the west, where his heart was. Heaven keep the cottage smokes, the homely firesides, the plodding, silent folk within ! These were the scenes that he knew, the worth and the happiness which he alone of all Scottish men understood and could expound, so that all the world might understand. One loves to believe that at that moment, with so fair a scene before him, Burns touched ground again after his town-spent winter, and bethought himself of the true and only life which awaited him among his pleasant holms and fields.

When he left Edinburgh he roamed through Scotland for a short time, penetrating to the edge of the Highlands with the almost temerity of a voyager in an unknown country ; for the Highlands then were closed with double barriers, Walter Scott being as yet but a long-

headed boy in Edinburgh, whose pulses had tingled down to the very finger-tips with gratification at a word from the older poet on their one encounter. After this he went to Mossiel, but only for a few days, to find all the country-side wondering over him, and to feel such a visionary sentiment of disgust as was naturally to be looked for in the circumstances, at the extraordinary difference between the sentiments of that little world when he left it in disgrace and when he returned to it in honour. Then he went off again, unsettled and scarcely happy notwithstanding his fame, with some money in his pocket but little comfort in his heart. He wandered across the Border, he went back to Edinburgh, he looked wistfully about him, wondering, perhaps, how it was that none of his many admirers made any attempt to help him to a reasonable new beginning of the thread of life. There was some vague idea of a farm on the estate of Dalswinton, near Dumfries ; and then came the suggestion of the Excise, a notion which had already crossed his mind. To Burns the post of an exciseman seemed in no way derogatory. It was his own idea steadily pursued for some time, and which he was very glad and thankful to succeed in at last. And perhaps it was as good a thing as could have been done for him ; although, after all the assaults upon, and all the excuses that have been made for, his fine friends, the wonder remains why no one of them tried at least to find a more worthy position for the poet. We do not desire to join in any foolish clamour on the inappropriateness of his occupation. He himself did not consider it inappropriate, which, after all, is the grand test. But how it happened that none of these well-off people had the bowels to ask what he meant to do, or to help

him in doing something, is a mystery beyond our power of solving. After all, he had to *ask* for the interest which got him even his humble appointment. Edinburgh did not take so much trouble as that. And he got £500, or, as some say, £600, for his poems, a great fortune, which, with sundry other circumstances, determined his course at once. In May 1788 he went home, married Jean Armour, and took the farm of Ellisland, near Dumfries. Jean seems to have made a good and true wife, and the country-side was charitable, and she was not of the class which is "called upon," or expects to receive public recognition by society. But still the circumstances of this new beginning were little likely to encourage a man who had now become sensitive to the opinions of a different class, and who had gained some knowledge of the way in which such matters are regarded elsewhere.

Burns remained in Ellisland three years, and our space requires that we should pass these years over briefly. Things went well with him at first, but notwithstanding his excellence in individual labour, it seems very doubtful whether he was ever a good farmer; and the new household was large and wasteful, and wanted regulation, which his wife, "sair hadden down by a sma' family," was not able to give. And perhaps he wearied of the monotony of his work—perhaps felt the fatal restlessness of one who has tasted ease, and is aware of the bitter difference between his own lot and that of others. He had felt this even in his youth; but now he had no longer the easy content and hopefulness of youth, though its vigour, its impatience, its thirst for happiness, still existed in full force within him. And now he was *settled*, wedded, fixed by fate, with change no longer possible—a fact which

of itself has often a startling effect upon the mind. Much can be borne when it is possible to look forward even to the chance of something better. But here no change could be. Before long he sought active work as an exciseman, and soon was galloping about the country, over a wide district, finding, no doubt, refreshment in the variety; but cutting off his last hope of success as a farmer. On the whole, probably, the life suited him very well. He had a great deal of riding—as much as two hundred miles in a week, some one says; and wherever he went, every door of rich and poor flew open to the poet. He must have had actual enjoyment of his popularity, such as falls to the lot of few writers, in these wanderings over the country. The very face of that pleasant land brightened with smiles to see him. In the farm and the cottage as well as in the hall, he was received with enthusiasm. Now and then he could do a kindness which gratified his good heart, and increased his popularity. No doubt he liked it well enough. And yet by times there would come over him a dreary thought of better things which might have been. He encouraged himself in his career with words which would seem but an ostentatious brag of his devotion to his duty if they did not mean something deeper. Thus, when he laments over his office of gauging auld wives' barrels, he ends with a recollection of its needfulness:—

"Thae moving things ca'ed wife and weans
Would move the very heart of stanes."

And he repeats the sentiment so often, that it would weary and almost disgust the reader, but for something infinitely sad and sorrowful which lies below:—

"To make a happy fireside chime
To bairns and wife,
That's the true pathos and sublime
Of human life."

How often does he say it!—re-minding himself of what he had to think of, of what he must work for—with pathetic reiteration. No; he would not allow himself to forget them, would not permit all these substantial reasons for living and working, and holding by his existence, to fade out of his mind. But that September night, when his anxious wife followed him out to the barnyard, and found him “striding up and down slowly, and contemplating the sky, which was singularly clear and starry,” what thoughts of the might-have-been were those which were surging up gloomily and sadly into the poet’s mind? The wife went in, hoping he would follow; but, coming out again, fearing that his cold would get worse by this exposure, found him lying “on a heap of straw, with his eyes fixed on a beautiful planet, which shone like another moon.” Those poet-eyes that glowed and dilated through the dew of unshed tears, what were they gazing at? A star, and the sweet image, maiden-pure, of his Mary dead; and who can tell what dead hopes, what schemes untold, what better life that might have been? Not a word of these could he say, in honour and justice, to the woman by his side, who stood and begged and importuned, no doubt, that he would not lie there and get his death of cold. He went in instead and wrote to a confidante who would not betray him—to Mary in heaven. And how tender, how wistful and longing, are those lovely lines! How clear before him, in that wintery-autumnal night, with early frost in the air making all the stars glow and glitter, rises the never-to-be-forgotten summer day, when—

“Ayr, gurgling, kissed his pebbled shore,
O’erhung with wild woods, thickening
green;”

and flowers and birds mingled their

sweet existence in the lovers’ meeting! Can he ever forget that sacred hour? His heart swells, and idle tears come to his eyes, as the good housewife bustles round him; and life, with its fireside comfort and unescapable reality, embraces and binds him in a hundred chains. Perhaps the dead Mary was no wiser, no loftier, than good-humoured forbearing Jean; but with her the life of dreams and imagination, the life that might have been, had departed. Where was their place of rest?

Nothing can be more touching than the silent, inexpressible pathos of this scene. Like a man of honour, he said nothing to his wife about it, nor indeed to any other mortal. And not even to his celestial confidante does he unbosom the heaviness of the dragging chain, and that sense of deadly weight and oppression which comes upon a man when fate closes round him, and he feels that nothing can better him, nothing make his future different from the past. His anguish breaks from him in the only way that was lawful and honourable to such a man, in such a way that even a jealous woman could scarcely take offence; and Jean does not seem to have been jealous, or anything but a good, easy, sweet-tempered soul. But what worlds of suggestion breathed out of that passionate remembrance, that sacred and unforgotten grief!

Professor Wilson treats this period of Burns’s life, as his defender and champion is sufficiently justified in treating it; and with a dazzling play of special pleading almost succeeds in proving to his bewildered reader that the life of his poet, then as at all other times, was perfectly successful, spotless, and splendid. We fear, however, that this theory will not stand against the concurring evidence of all his biographers. His life was full of temptation, full of

opportunity for those convivial enjoyments which were not only counted excusable by the temper of the time, but gloried in by all whose heads were strong enough to indulge in them without ruin. And to ourselves it appears little wonder that a man to whom such unbounded hopes had once opened up, and to whom such moderate realisation of hope had come—who felt himself fatally distanced in the race, and whose heart had failed him along with his hopes,—to us it is little wonder that he fell into greater and greater indulgence in that easy way of forgetfulness. He had failed even as a farmer, and he had failed in finding any higher standing-ground; but in every tavern, and at every uproarious table where he chanced to find himself, there was oblivion, there was honour and admiration and enthusiastic homage. He might be but a hard-riding gauger in the morning, but at night he was a king. And of all things in the world to be kept in lawful and moderate bounds, this habit is the most difficult. To “fetter flames with silken band” is an enterprise as easy. There seems no doubt that the entire country-side, great and small, abetted and encouraged Burns thus to forget his sorrows—until the moment came when the more prudent persons in it perceived that the excitement of his life was becoming too intense, and the race towards some precipice of downfall more headlong than could be encouraged any longer. Then they stopped short in their invitations “for his good,” and advised him for his good, and became exhortatory and full of admonitions. It is very likely that the poet took it badly—and with reason enough. For no man had so befriended him, so helped him in his difficult way, as to have the right of exhortation. They had invited him to their houses, so long as his visit was an honour—they had fêted him,

so long as fêting Burns was a distinction to themselves; and now what right had they to stop short and advise? So he quarrelled with some hotly, and with others coldly, feeling a mist of separation grow between him and many whom he had held in warm esteem: and the country-side gathered itself away from him and stood by, with that stillness and awful interest which marks the spectators of every desperate tragedy, to see how long the headlong race could last, and how soon the catastrophe would come.

The race did not last long. In 1791 he gave up his farm at Ellisland, and removed into a small house at Dumfries. There he lived five years—and died. Through all this time he was, to use a homely phrase, burning the candle at both ends. He rode fast and far, and attended diligently to all the duties of his vocation. He poured forth floods of songs—songs full of passion and fervour—and which were not mere creations of the brain, but commemorated—in warmer terms than was probably called for by one out of fifty of these relationships—an amount of agreeable intercourse with his fellow-creatures which must have occupied no small portion of his time. He wrote numerous letters; he entered warmly, sometimes too warmly, into politics; he often spent half the night after this active employment of the day in merry companies, of which he was the inspiration, and where his talk was more fascinating than the wine—or, to speak more truly, if less poetically, the toddy—which flowed freely enough all the same. And into all these multifarious occupations he rushed with the impetuosity and unity of his nature, doing nothing by halves. He threw himself into Thomson's book of Songs with zeal as great as if it had been the only work he had in hand; and withal, neither pleasure nor poetry prevent-

ed him from doing his work as an exciseman with the most punctilious exactitude. And Thomson accepted the songs, and was easily, very easily, convinced that the author wanted no remuneration; and all the gentlemen who had known him, and did know him, and to some of whom even he had told his hopes and wishes, stood by, not even helping him on to be a supervisor, the most modest bit of promotion. His hope was that he might, on securing this step, have been eligible for the post of collector, which was well paid, and would have given him abundant leisure for literary work. We do not remember whether this easy possibility of improving his position has been much dwelt on by his biographers; but the neglect of it is a much more serious sin to be charged against the Dumfriesshire gentry than the original offence of giving him an exciseman's place, which has been thrown in their teeth so often. A little trouble, a little steady backing from one or two influential persons, might have easily raised Burns to this modest eminence, and given him all that his heart desired. But this backing no one gave. It would seem incredible were it not very far from a solitary instance of such strange carelessness. Were it to be done over again, no doubt the same would happen. The patrons were ready to give a fluctuating hospitality and good advice, and a subscription for a book, or even a little money in genteel alms, would he have accepted it; but to take the trouble to hoist him gently on in the way chosen by himself, that is what they would not do.

Meanwhile he did his humble work with less and less hope, and tried his best to get such good as was possible out of the dregs of his broken life. Much gentle and kind domestic virtue lingered about him to the end, notwithstanding all his vagaries. He would help his boys

to learn their lessons, and read poetry with them, directing their childish taste; and for years there might be seen of an afternoon by any chance passer-by, in a little back street in Dumfries, through the ever-open door, one of the greatest of British poets, sitting reading, with half-a-dozen noisy children about, and their mother busy with a housewife's ordinary labour. This, we say, was visible to everybody who chanced to pass that way; and the days ran on quietly, and the world grew used to the sight, and it never seems to have occurred to any one how many blockheads had comfortable libraries to maunder in, while this man—sole of his race in Scotland, and almost in the kingdom, for Wordsworth and Coleridge were still little more than boys—had neither quiet nor retirement possible. With an inconceivable passive quiet the good people went and came, and took it as the course of nature. A little later they were proud of having seen it; in the mean time it moved them not an inch. Neither would it now, were it all to be done over again.

There is one pathetic scene still, which appears to us out of the mists before death and peace come to end all. Professor Wilson rejects the story with that scornful laughter which is shrill with coming tears. But we see no reason to reject it. On the contrary, all the internal evidence is in its favour. The story is told by a young country gentleman, who rode into Dumfries on a fine summer evening to attend a ball, and saw Burns walking by himself down the side of the street, while various county people, drawn together by the evening's entertainment, were shopping or walking on the other.

"The horseman dismounted and joined Burns, who, on his proposing to him to cross the street, said, 'Nay, nay, my young friend, that's all over now;'

and quoted, after a pause, some verses of Lady Grizel Baillie's pathetic ballad:—

“ ‘His bonnet stood ance fu' fair on his brow,
His auld ane looked better than mony ane's new,
But now he lets't wear any way it will hing,
And casts himsel dowie upon the corn-bing.

Oh were we young, as we ance has been,
We suld have been galloping down on yon green,
And linking it ower the lily-white lea,
And werena my heart licht I would dee.’ ”

It seems impossible to conceive that such a story could have been invented. To show that his forlorn heart was still “licht,” God help him! Burns took the young man home and made him merry. What words these are! and with what unspeakable meaning they must have fallen from the poet's lips. Sad courage, endurance, gaiety, and profound untellable despair—not any great outburst, but an almost tranquil ordinary state of mind. “Werena my heart licht I would dee”—it is the sentiment of all his concluding years.

And thus he died—thirty-seven years old—worn out. His old terror of a jail came over him again like a spectre at the end, but he died owing no man anything, stern in his independence to the last. Of course his friends in Dumfries would not have allowed him to go to jail for five or ten pounds, Mr Lockhart says. And we answer No, of course they would not—they dared not. But nobody came forward to say, Here is my purse. Nobody even attempted to pay his poor little seaside lodging for him, as Professor Wilson remarks, or to lift a single obstacle out of his way. It was so easy to say that he was proud, and would accept help from no one; and no one, so far as we can see, ever attempted, with generous comprehension of a generous pride, to chase these scruples away.

He died cheerfully and manfully like a Christian; though with his heart rent asunder by fears for the helpless children whom he was leaving behind him. And the moment he was dead his friends came and buried him: and red-coated splendours lined the streets, and a certain noble officer who would not in his lifetime permit the gauger to be introduced to him, played mourner to the dead poet. Strange satire, enough to tempt devils to laughter, but men to very different feelings. And while there was scarce a meal left in the penniless house the bells tolled and the shops were closed, and a great procession swept through the streets, and volleys were fired over the grave of him who had been carried out of that home of poverty. What a change all in a moment!—because he was dead, and neglect or honour, help or desertion, could affect him nevermore.

But let us add that the true Scotland, for which he lived and sang, never slighted and never has forgotten her poet. She gave him an education such as a prince might have been glad of, and many a delightful hour by Ayr and Nith, and in the breezy wholesome fields. And so long as he was in her safe keeping he was happy, and strong, and spotless, a very model of poetic life and joy and freedom. She has given him a grave besides, and many a tear which would have kept it green, but for the senseless blocks of stone with which it has been heaped over. And wherever the common people from whom he sprang, whom he loved and understood and made known to the world—wherever they meet they sing his songs, they speak his language, they hold his name dear. It is all they ever could do for him. And the others—built his monument. It was late, but it was handsome, or so at least the taste of the time thought. And what more would a Poet have?

SERPENT-CHARMING IN CAIRO.

TO THE EDITOR OF BLACKWOOD'S MAGAZINE.

ON my visit to Egypt during the winter of 1868-9, I was interested and amused by the tricks of the "serpent-charmer," the baboon-trainer, and other zoologically-disposed natives, who exhibit the accomplishments of themselves and their captives in the warm and bright January sunshine on the broad *trottoir* of the Esbekiah, below the entry-terrace of Shepherd's Hotel, whereon the traversers to and from our Indian empire, with other sojourners, love to bask and congregata.

I wished to see the process by which the charmer clears the house infested by ophidian vermin, hoping to get some clue to its intelligible element. I found in Mr Broadway, formerly a pupil of my old acquaintance Cartright, and now surgeon-dentist to the Khedive, the Hareem, and the *haut ton* of Cairo, a friendly and willing ally in this matter. He made an arrangement with a notable member of the privileged family of Derwishes, who profess to inherit the *quasi* supernatural faculty, and drove me to a part of the suburbs of Cairo where dwellings were to be found likely to require and profit by it.

The charmer came to appointment, accompanied by a boy with a bag, said to be for the snakes that were to be captured.

The houses were of the low tumble-down character common in those suburbs; most of them detached, in patches of slovenly-cultivated ground.

I suggested that the charmer should strip, and have his garments searched before entering; but he refused, and even resisted the temp-

tation of half-a-sovereign extra—a large sum in piasters—which I thought suspicious. The outer garment of the villanous-looking old Sheik was the long loose frock of a coarse blue cotton-stuff, called "galabieh," with large baggy sleeves, or what looked like sleeves from the mode of its adjustment. A conjuror would have concealed the major part of his property in its ample folds.

He entered a house followed by his boy and ourselves. I may mention that we were joined by Mr Solly, son of my old and esteemed friend the late President of the Royal College of Surgeons in London, who happened then to be in Cairo. The Sheik, on entering, stepped forward, mysteriously glancing to the right and left, muttering and occasionally whistling, and passing from room to room, closely followed and watched by us; he, however, left that house, intimating that it was free from snakes.

In the next house—and whenever any inhabitant was visible, the charmer was reverently welcomed—on entering the second room I noticed that a doorway led from it to a darkened apartment without other entry or exit. The charmer stood at this doorway, his legs apart, his arms on the lintel, his turbaned visage poked forward, and the incantation and whistling becoming emphatic. I tried to get into the place, but there was no passing without shoving the fellow aside, and the boy loudly protested against my proximity and disturbance. The charmer next stretched forward the hand carrying his stick and tapped

the wall of the darkened room; then, suddenly turning round to us, exclaimed, according to my interpreter, "The snake, my cousin, there he is!" and stepped down into the room. We followed, and a small specimen of the common harmless house-snake of Egypt (*Coluber atrovirens*), half coiled in seemingly a semi-torpid or sluggish state, lay on the floor. On the supposition that it had been coaxed out of a chink in the wall I should have expected to see some movement of the reptile or endeavour to escape; but we were given to understand that it was charmed. The boy seized it behind the head, and, after I had inspected it, popped it into his bag, which I observed to contain others, apparently of the same kind.

We visited four or five other houses, in two of which a serpent on the floor was the result of the incantations and movements exhibited by the charmer at the entry to the alleged infested apartment.

I noted that he never "charmed" save when he came upon a room to which there was no other entry than a doorway from the one we happened to be in.

To my strongly-urged desire to first enter such *cul-de-sac*, in order to see the issue of the mesmerised serpent from its lurking-place, I was told that the charmer objected, on account of the evil influence of the presence of an "uncomplimentarily-specified individual" upon the operation of the magic process.

It reminded me of the objections of our own spiritualists to the presence of a sceptic, and to too much light in the room.

I thereupon watched the Sheikh the more closely, and distinctly detected a slight but rapid and energetic quivering movement of the left arm and sleeve, immediately preceding his announcement of the suc-

cess of his incantation. The poor snake, which had been jerked out, lay, like the first, in a half-coiled, sluggish state on the floor.

I charged the impostor with the fact, and was happily unacquainted with the meaning of the loud and voluble remonstrances of the derwish and his gathering of dusky believers, to which my friendly conductor put a stop by threatening to thrash the saint.

I returned to the hotel with the conviction that "serpent-charming" was not conducted under circumstances favourable to a rational or scientific explanation of the process; that, on the contrary, it was attended, like other marvels which dread the light, with purposive obstructions to fair and accurate observations; and, finally, that it was a rude mode of conjuring, in which the snake, professed to be charmed out of a hole in the wall, was concealed upon the person of the conjuror, and transferred by sleight of arm and hand to the floor of the room alleged to have been infested.

I parted, gratefully, from my worthy and liberal guide,—for the time Mr Broadway devoted to this wish of mine was, I knew, of considerable value to him,—under the impression, however, that he had engaged in the experiment as a believer in serpent-charming, and with a view of removing my scepticism thereon. The result was, evidently, a shaking of his own belief, though without unqualified acceptance of my explanation of the process.

Mr Broadway, however, kindly promised to repeat the experiments after my departure from Cairo, with certain precautions and conditions which I suggested. He associated with him in the investigation an intelligent and close observer, and I have been recently favoured by Dr Grant with the following communications on the subject:—

"CAIRO, October 12, 1871.

"PROFESSOR OWEN.

"DEAR SIR,—I write this to prevent your using any documents you may have on serpent-charming, for scientific purposes, till the subject is more thoroughly examined. Mr Broadway and I have set about clearing up the matter in a way that will recommend itself to you, and we have already got three-fourths finished. Had it not been that I am at present very busy, you would have had a full account of what we have already ascertained, instead of this *promissory* note. Knowing that you are anxious to have serpent-charming properly investigated, so as to leave no shadow of a doubt either way, I beg you will wait for my communication, which I am convinced will satisfy your mind, in as far as serpent-charming in Egypt is concerned; and it is allowed that the Egyptians stand second to none in this respect, unless to the Hindoos; and rest assured, even in their case, it is but a piece of legerdemain.

"Pardon the liberty I have taken in thus writing you, and believe me,

"Yours respectfully,

(Signed) "J. A. S. GRANT."

"CAIRO, October 20, 1871.

"PROFESSOR OWEN.

"DEAR SIR,—By last mail I sent you a letter promising to give you some information on serpent-charming, and I now take pleasure in communicating to you the facts that have come to light since Mr Broadway and I have put the matter to the test. We procured two serpents from the desert, one a *cerastes cornutus*, the other a *cobra di capello*, and had them kept in a box made with two compartments. A professed serpent-charmer, who had lately successfully practised his art in other houses, was sent for several times by those who had employed him before, but each time an evasive answer was returned, and he could not be got. After a time we were successful in getting a member of the Rifaueh to come.

"The Rifaueh are the first and most celebrated of the four orders of the Darwishea. They are divided

into three sects, with distinct functions. These are—

"1st, Floranuyeh or Owlad Ilwan.—These pretend to thrust iron spikes into their eyes and body without injury; to pass swords through the body, and skewers through the cheeks, without producing a wound. They also eat snakes and live coals.

"2d, Saaduyeh.—These pretend to handle with impunity venomous serpents and scorpions. They also partly devour serpents.

"3d, Owlad Syidi Gamaa.—These pretend to detect the presence of serpents anywhere, and to have the power of calling them out from their hiding-places. They also eat them entire.

"The Order was founded by Seyyid Ahmad Rifaah el Kebur, who is reported to have had supernatural power over serpents, the secret of which he handed down to his followers. He is revered as a saint; and his tomb is said to be full of serpents, so that even in death he attracts them to him. The Sheikh of the Order resides in Cairo.

"We concealed the box containing the cerastes and the cobra under a divan, but with the box-lids sufficiently open to allow of their exit. When the charmer was called in he consented to an examination, and allowed his loose frock to slip from his shoulders to his feet, showing himself naked. In an instant, however, he replaced it over his shoulders and proceeded to his work.* He had a long slender stick which was quite solid. He went along the passage on which the rooms opened, at one time whistling, then beating the wall with his stick, and repeating an incantation in Arabic. While Mr Broadway followed and kept his eye on the charmer, I watched the boy who had accompanied him with a bag of serpents. When he came opposite the kitchen door, which was wide open, he stopped, stepped forward a little, and then starting back, exclaimed, 'There is one—there is one, come, come!' At this moment Mr Broadway peeped round the edge of the door, but saw nothing. The charmer seeing this movement, made a feint as if the serpent had seen him (Mr B.), and

* Snakes concealed in the sleeve-bags would not, necessarily, be displaced or detected in this process. The frock should have been removed and searched.—R. O.

turned back to its hole. Then he rushed into the kitchen and with his stick brought out a serpent, a harmless house-snake, which I am sure was not there before he introduced it. He now began to play with it, making it bite his galabieh and pretending to tear out its poison-fangs.

"He was told there was still another serpent to be removed, and that of a different kind. He deposited this one *alive* in the boy's bag. (They profess that if once they kill or connive at the killing of a snake, they would for ever lose their power over them. How then do they retain their power and yet eat them?) This time I kept my eye upon the charmer, and Mr Broadway watched the boy, as we entered the room where our serpents were. There were also other spectators. He went through the same manoeuvres as in the passage, only, after having gone several times around the room and effected nothing, he began to poke with his stick in holes about the walls, when he was told that any one could poke a snake out of his hole in that way, but that *he* was to call it out.

"Failing to find an opportunity of doing his work, he asked to have a wardrobe opened, which I did, leaving one half of the door shut. Behind this he began to poke, and before I could detect anything he inserted his arm, and cried 'There is one! there is one!' and pretended to exert great force in drawing it out. Then he cried 'There are two! there are two!' and directly brought out two ordinary house-snakes. We could not detect the trick, though convinced that it was sleight-of-hand. We insisted, however, that there were more serpents in the room, but he was emphatic in his assertions that there were none; and swore by his saint who had invested him with this power, that the place was cleared of them.

"Finding that we could not urge him on to further display of his skill, I asked for his stick, and with it I pushed from under the divan, the box in which our serpents were undisturbed. He looked at them and exclaimed, 'These are from the desert, from the Western Mountains. I don't know how to work with these.' We all laughed heartily, which so annoyed him that he began to prove that he

was one of the order of serpent-charmers by eating one of his own serpents. This, however, did not convince us, and calling for the boy, we made him put one of his house-snakes into a hat, and placed the hat in the middle of the room. Then we asked the charmer to call this snake out. 'Oh no!' he said, 'I cannot do this; because, once a snake has been charmed and imprisoned, it will never be charmed again to become imprisoned again.'

"Thus baffled, we took him before the Prefect of Police, and found that he was one of the Rifaueh. The Prefect told him that he was a conjuror (Habass), and that all his kind were conjurors, and ended by saying, 'Be off with you, you dog!' On explaining, however, to the Prefect what we wanted, he assured us that the whole of them, not excepting the Sheikh of the order, were deceivers; but he would further our object by ordering the Sheikh to appear next day.

"On leaving the Zabatieh the charmer and his boy, who had been waiting outside, clamoured for 'bucksheesh,' which we promised to give them when they returned with the Sheikh. They walked off sheepishly without further solicitations. During the afternoon of the next day we took our serpents to the Police-station to meet the Sheikh. In the crowd outside a hot discussion was kept up regarding the powers of the Sheikh,—a Jew maintaining that he had no more power over these serpents than any other person, and that he would not dare to touch them; a Moslim, on the other hand, declaring that the Sheikh would not only handle them with impunity, but would eat them.

"When the Sheikh appeared I questioned him carefully, and obtained the following information,—that his name was Mohammed Yaseen; that he was the Sheikh es Seggadeh el Rifa'eeyeh (occupant of the prayer-carpet of the founder of the order: the 'Seggadeh' is considered the spiritual throne); that he knew how to devour fire and eat snakes; that he had secrets from his ancestors that those under him did not know, and that some of those under him had secrets that he did not know; that he dare not touch those serpents of ours; that if he were bitten by them

he would be poisoned like other men ; that he did not know how to charm serpents ; that there were none in Cairo who could ; that if there were any who said they could, they were kadabeen (liars) ; that there were only fifty or sixty men who had this secret transmitted to them from father to son ; that he knew for certain these had the power of detecting where serpents were, and could entice them out from their hiding-places by calling 'My cousin, my cousin ;' that all serpents were alike to them, and not one more capable of being charmed than another ; that you might take a serpent of your own and put a mark upon it, and secrete it anywhere and they would bring it out for you ; that these men are called 'Owlad Syidi Gamaa,' and live in two villages (Deesibs in the Minoofoeh district, and Dinoshier, near Mahallah) at a considerable distance from Cairo ; that they are agriculturists, and earn their bread by tilling the soil ; that they have this power over serpents imparted to them on condition that they never take any reward for whatever service they may render in using it (hence they do not travel round the country, nor lay themselves out for serpent-charming, but remain at their villages, following remunerative employments) ; that all those who practise the art of serpent-charming and take money for it are deceivers ; that he expected one of the genuine charmers to visit Cairo next month (shaaban) and he promised to bring him to us, begging in an undertone that the exhibition should not be at the Police-station.

"The Prefect being now disengaged, began to cross-examine the Sheikh, and we noticed a great discrepancy in his different answers. He now confessed that he did not know positively that these fifty or sixty men could call serpents from their hiding-places, but as it was the talk (*on dit*) of the country, he believed it. The Prefect, however, declared that they were all Habbasheen (conjurors) whether they accepted of money or not. On this the Sheikh became angry and left. We followed, and on passing through the courtyard we heard the disappointed Moslems excusing their Sheikh by saying that we would not give up the serpents, and

on that account the Sheikh would not display his powers. Their belief is that once the Sheikh has brought serpents under his influence, he must not let them go out of his possession. The Sheikh, however, did not intimate any such thing to us, but absolutely refused to touch them.

(Signed) "J. A. S. GRANT."

In the last letter with which I have been favoured, Dr Grant writes :—

"The other day I met the 'serpent-boy' who accompanied the 'serpent-charmer' we had employed, and I bribed him to tell me how we were deceived. He was unwilling at first to inform me, but, after a little wrangling about how much the bribe should be, he declared that the charmer had the serpents concealed about his dress in small bags, one being in one bag and two in the other. This appeared to me to afford a feasible explanation of what the charmer effected, for the two serpents were twined together just as if they had been confined in a small space, and the great exertion manifested on his part to get them out was a mere pretence to have his other hand introduced to manage to open the bag and to conceal it while we were being attracted by the serpents."

Human nature is pretty much the same in all ages and climes.

Unregenerate craftsmen, if work be scarce, and comes not naturally, will "make work" when others have to pay for it.

It seems to be an accepted principle with plumbers and glaziers, for example, that they have no further concern with the fire they have had to kindle on the roof of hall or castle after the lead it has melted has been duly applied *secundum artem*. It would be a cheap insurance if a fireman or policeman or other trusty individual were employed, as a rule, to visit and inspect the locality immediately after such artisans had left work. It may be deemed an imperative precaution when a mansion stored with price-

less rarities has any need of the services of a plumber.

But to come back closer to my subject. At a happy period of my life when I came into possession of the charming abode assigned to me by the gracious favour of the Queen, in Richmond Park, I was discussing with the gardener, one fine evening in May, some horticultural operations, when a functionary of the Park was announced and made his appearance. He was the "mole-catcher," and had plied his vocation there, he told me, man and boy, for upwards of fifty years. He respectfully intimated to me that my predecessor had found it necessary to avail himself of his services in keeping down what would otherwise be a grievous pest to both lawn and flower-bed. I expressed my surprise at the intimation. Rats, I knew, were plentiful about, but moles I had thought were a scarce article in a garden. However, I inquired the "terms," as it was "no part of his regular business to look after the gentlemen's gardens belonging to the Park." My predecessor, it appeared, had subsidised the old expert at a guinea a-year, and I was warranted "never to see a mole twice" in the garden on these terms. The difficulty, it struck me, was as to getting any glimpse at all of the interesting burrower: but it was the mole-heaps old Warps meant; once levelled after the upturner had been trapped, they would not reappear. I hesitated, and pondered on the capabilities of my then limited salary from the Royal College of Surgeons, and its contrast with the probable fortune of my gallant predecessor at Sheen Lodge, and concluded that I must forego the luxury of keeping a mole-catcher.

Next morning I was disturbed at breakfast by my gardener, with the announcement that the moles had been at work; and, by a most curious

coincidence, in the very part of the kitchen-garden where the conference with the mole-catcher had been held on the previous evening. There, sure enough, no fewer than six mole-hills had been raised in that very night, most of them breaking up the rows of the brightly-sprouting peas, on which I had been building flattering hopes of a rarely-enjoyed luxury. Touching which, I remember Mr Ellis of the "Star and Garter" once giving me an instance of the refinement that the gustatory sense may attain to by due cultivation. The prime-warden of a City Company, holding a summer-festival on Richmond Hill, interpellated the waiter by,—“You rascal, these are mixed peas!” Meaning that only half of them had been gathered on the day of the feast.

It seemed plain to me that moles and fresh-gathered peas were incompatible. I struck my flag: sent for the mole-trapper, and paid him his guinea in advance. I never regretted it. I got more mole-lore out of that old gentleman than I had ever before heard or read of. He always reminded me of a mole himself—a thin, prognathic visage, the nose longer than it was deep, and ending in a red point; the smallest, keenest eyes that ever peered out of sockets.

If at home on the evenings of his professional inspection, I usually ordered a jug of Mortlake ale into the arbour, and went in for mole-gossip.

I owe to Warps my first evidence of the vocal powers of *Mustela vulgaris*.

“You know, sir, them parts of the Park as the servant-galls and people won't go near to, after dark, coz of the screams of the murdered babby as was heard thereabout half the night.”

“Well, it must have taken a long time to kill,” I interpose.

"Now I tell you what that was, sir, it were a weasel as got trapped in one of my mole-traps, and I never heard a beast squeal so loud afore. I couldn't 'a thought such a little critter could 'a made such a row."

After a long pull at the jug, old Warps grew confidential. "Now, I don't mind showing you, sir, what a mole can do." And he pulled a live one out of the depths of a capacious pocket in his fustian jacket. "You'd never think to look at him he could run so quick." And I own I was surprised the first time I witnessed the rate the little short-limbed animal sped along the hard ground till he came to the nearest bed, then with snout and the fore-shovels up flew the soft mould, and he was out of sight in a few seconds.

"But, Warps," I exclaimed, "he's got into the carnation-bed, and will have them all up!"

"Oh, never fear, sir! I'll have him again to-morrow;" and so he did.

Whenever I wanted a mole for anatomical purposes, I had only to send to old Warps and it was forthcoming. No matter at what season, or of what sex, or in what stage of the "interesting condition" of the female. When other monographs now in hand are finished off, I may have leisure to work up my materials, so obtained, for an embryogeny of *Talpa europæa*.

I own to a voluntary blindness to one weakness of Warps, which I had not at first suspected, and to which some of my neighbours were less indulgent.

I was making a call on the resident of one of those beautiful villas at Roehampton, just outside the Park wall, and was ushered into my friend's garden. We paced along the noble gravel-walk separated by a well-grown evergreen hedge from the pathway to the offices. Our chat happened to turn upon molea.

"Do you know," I asked, "how quickly they will run on hard gravel like this?"

"Oh yes," said he; "I have seen it, and I can tell you more than that. Did you know, Professor, that a mole can leap?"

"No," said I, "that it can't do; its organisation is quite unfitted for that mode of motion."

"It can, though," replied my neighbour; "I have seen a mole take a flying leap over that very Portugal laurel" (it was at least 8 feet high), "and come down on this very walk. It was then I first saw how fast a mole could run. Mr So-and-so" (a common acquaintance) "happened to be here with me, and if he had not been quick enough to give the little beast a kick on the ribs before it had buried itself in the flower-bed, I should have believed it to have been a rat. Fancying I heard a footstep in the back walk just before the mole flew over the fence, I called my servant and asked if any one had been that way to the kitchen? 'Only old Warps,' he said, 'the mole-catcher.' 'Ah,' rejoined my neighbour, 'I suspected so. Tell that old rogue when next you see him, that if ever I catch him within fifty yards of my boundary, I'll make him remember it the longest day he has got to live!'"

Poor old Warps was not far from his longest and last when he sent the live mole flying over the laurel bushes. About a month after he was laid in mother earth, where he rests quieter than his subjects.

This he may plead; that, if he brought the vermin into the grounds he was paid to keep out of them, he trapped them fairly, and made no pretence to an art he did not possess.

RICHARD OWEN.

Christmas-tide, 1871,
Sheen Lodge,
Richmond Park.

THE MAID OF SKER.—PART VII.

CHAPTER XXXVII.—TWO POOR CHILDREN.

By this time I owe it to all the kind people who have felt some pity for our Bardie and her fortunes, to put off no longer a few little things which I ought to tell them. In the first place, they must not think of me, but look upon me as nobody (treat me, in fact, as I treat myself), and never ask what I knew just now, and what I came to know afterwards. Only to trust me (as now they must) to act in all things honourably, and with no regard to self; and not only that, but with lofty feeling, and a sense of devotion towards the members of the weaker sex.

Captain Drake Bampfylde was the most unlucky of born mortals. To begin with, he was the younger son of that very fine Sir Philip, and feeling that he had far more wit and enterprise than his elder brother, while thankful to nature for these endowments, he needs must feel amiss with her for having mismanaged his time of birth. Now please to observe my form of words. I never said that he did so feel, I only say that he must have done so, unless she had made him beyond herself; which, from her love for us, she hardly ever tries to do. However, he might have put up with that mistake of the goddess that sits cross-legged,—I have heard of her, I can tell you, and a ship named after her; though to spell her name would be a travail to me, fatal perhaps at my time of life,—I mean to say, at any rate, that young Drake Bampfylde might have managed to get over the things against him, and to be a happy fellow, if he only had common luck. But Providence having gifted him with un-

usual advantages of body, and mind, and so forth, seemed to think its duty done, and to leave him to the devil afterwards.

This is a bad way of beginning life, especially at too young an age to be up to its philosophy; and the only thing that can save such a man is a tremendous illness, or the downright love of a first-rate woman. Thence they recover confidence, or are brought into humility, and get a bit of faith again, as well as being looked after purely, and finding a value again to fight for, after abandoning their own. Not that Drake Bampfylde ever did slip into evil courses, so far as I could hear of him, or even give way to the sense of luck, and abandon that of duty. I am only saying how things turn out, with nineteen men out of twenty. In spite of chances, he may have happened just to be the twentieth. I know for sure that he turned up well, though vexed with tribulation. Evil times began upon him, when he was nothing but a boy. He fell into a pit of trouble through his education; and ever since from time to time new grief had overtaken him. A merrier little chap, or one more glad to make the best of things, could not be found; as was said to me by the cook, and also the parlour-maid. He would do things, when he came out among the servants, beautifully; and the maids used to kiss him so that his breath was taken away with pleasing them. And then he went to school, and all the maids, and boys, and men almost, came out to see the yellow coach, and throw an old shoe after him. This, however, did not help him, as was seriously

hoped; and why? Because it went heel-foremost, from the stupidity of the caster. News came, in a little time, that there was mischief upward, and that Master Drake must be fetched home, to give any kind of content again. For he was at an ancient grammar-school in a town seven miles from Exeter, where everything was done truly well to keep the boys from fighting. Only the habit and tradition was that if they must fight, fight they should until one fell down, and could not come to the scratch again. And Drake had a boy of equal spirit with his own to contend against, not however of bone and muscle to support him thoroughly. But who could grieve, or feel it half so much as young Drake Bampfylde did, when the other boy, in three days' time, died from a buzzing upon his brain? He might have got into mischief now, even though he was of far higher family than the boy who had foundered instead of striking; but chiefly for the goodwill of the school, and by reason of the boy's father having plenty of children still to feed, and consenting to accept aid therein, that little matter came to be settled among them very pleasantly. Only the course of young Drake's life was changed thereby, as follows.

The plan of his family had been to let him get plenty of learning at school, and then go to Oxford Colleges and lay in more, if agreeable; and so grow into holy orders of the Church of England, well worth the while of any man who has a good connection. But now it was seen, without thinking twice, that all the disturbers and blasphemers of the Nonconformist tribe, now arising everywhere (as in dirty Hezekiah, and that greasy Hepzibah, who dared to dream such wickedness concerning even me), every one of these rogues was sure

to cast it up against a parson, in his most heavenly stroke of preaching, that he must hold his hand, for fear of killing the clerk beneath him. And so poor Drake was sent to sea; the place for all the scape-goats.

Here ill fortune dogged him still, as its manner always is, after getting taste of us. He heeded his business so closely that he tumbled into the sea itself; and one of those brindle-bellied sharks took a mouthful out of him. Nevertheless he got over that, and fell into worse trouble. To wit, in a very noble fight between his Britannic Majesty's sloop of war "Hellgoblins," carrying twelve guns and two carronades (which came after my young time), and the French corvette "Heloise," of six-and-twenty heavy guns, he put himself so forward that they trained every gun upon him. Of course those fellows can never shoot anything under the height of the moon, because they never stop to think; nevertheless he contrived to take considerable disadvantage. By a random shot they carried off the whole of one side of his whiskers; and the hearing of the other ear fell off, though not involved in it. The doctors could not make it out: however, I could thoroughly, from long acquaintance with cannon-balls. Also he had marks of powder under his skin, that would never come out, being of a coarse-grained sort, and something like the bits of tea that float in rich folks' tea-cups. Happening, as he did by nature, to be a fine, florid, and handsome man, this powder vexed him dreadfully. Nevertheless the ladies said, loving powder of their own, that it made him look so much nicer.

That, however, was quite a trifle, when compared to his next misfortune. Being gazetted to a ship, and the whole crew proud to sail under him, he left the Downs with the wind abaft, and all hands in high

spirits. There was nothing those lads could not have done; and in less than twelve hours they could do nothing. A terrible gale from south-west arose; in spite of utmost seamanship they were caught in the callipers of the Varne, and not a score left to tell of it.

These were things to try a man, and prove the stuff inside him. However, he came out gallantly. For being set afloat again, after swimming all night and half a day, he brought into the Portland Roads a Crappo ship of twice his tonnage, and three times his gunnage; and now his sailors were delighted, having hope of prize-money. That they never got, of course (which, no doubt, was all the better for their constitutions), but their knowledge of battle led them to embark again with him, having sense (as we always have) of luck, and a crooked love of a man whose bad luck seems to have taken the turn. And yet their judgment was quite amiss, and any turn taken was all for the worse. Captain Bampfylde did a thing, which even I, in my hotter days, would rather have avoided. He ran a thirty-two gun frigate under the chains of a sixty-four. He thought that they must shoot over him, while he laid his muzzles to her water-line, and then carried her by boarding.

Nothing could have been finer than this idea of doing it, and with eight French ships out of nine, almost, he must have succeeded. But once more his luck came over, like a cloud, and darkened him. The Frenchmen had not only courage (which they have too much of), but also what is not their gift, with lucky people against them, self-command and steadiness. They closed their lower ports, and waited for the Englishmen to come up. They knew that the side of their ship fell in, like the thatch of a rick, from the lower ports, ten feet above the

enemy. They had their nettings ready, and a lively sea was running.

It grieves as well as misbecomes me to describe the rest of it. The Englishmen swore with all their hearts at their ladders, the sea, and everything, and their captain was cast down between the two ships, and compelled to dive tremendously; in a word it came to this, that our people either were totally shot and drowned, or spent the next Sunday in prison at Brest.

Now here was a thing for a British captain, such as the possibility of it never could be dreamed of. To have lost one ship upon a French shoal, and the other to a Frenchman! Drake Bampfylde, but for inborn courage, must have hanged himself outright. And, as it was, he could not keep from unaccustomed melancholy. And, when he came home upon exchange, it was no less than his duty to abandon pleasure now, and cheerfulness, and comfort; only to consider how he might redeem his honour.

In the thick of this great trouble came another three times worse. I know not how I could have borne it, if it had been my case, stoutly as I fight against the public's rash opinions. For this Captain was believed, and with a deal of evidence, to have committed slaughter upon his brother's children, and even to have buried them. He found it out of his power to prove that really he had not done it, nor had even entertained a wish that it might happen so. Everybody thought how much their dying must avail him; and though all had a good idea of his being upright, most of them felt that this was nothing, in such strong temptation. I have spoken of this before, and may be obliged again to speak of it; only I have rebutted always, and ever shall rebut, low ideas. Yet if truly he did kill them,

was he to be blamed or praised, for giving them good burial? The testimony upon this point was no more than that of an unclad man, which must of course have been worthless; until they put him into a sack, and in that form received it. This fellow said that he was coming home towards his family, very late one Friday night; and he knew that it was Friday night because of the songs along the road of the folk from Barnstaple market. He kept himself out of their way, because they had such a heap of clothes on; and being established upon the sands, for the purpose of washing his wife and children, who never had seen water before, and had therefore become visited, he made a short cut across the sands to the hole they had all helped to scoop out, in a stiff place where some roots grew. This was his home; and not a bad one for a seaside visit. At any rate he seemed to have been as happy there as any man with a family can experience; especially when all the members need continual friction.

This fine fellow was considering how he could get on at all with that necessary practice, if the magistrates should order all his frame to be covered up; and fearing much to lose all chance of any natural action—because there was a crusade threatened—he lay down in the moonlight, and had a thoroughly fine roll in the sand. Before he had worn out this delight, and while he stopped to enjoy it more, he heard a sound, not far away, of somebody digging rapidly. Or at any rate, if it was not digging, it was something like it. The weather was wonderfully hot, so that the rushes scarcely felt even cool to his breast and legs. In that utterly lonely place (for now the road was a mile behind him, and the sands without a track, and the stars almost at midnight), there came upon him sudden fright, impossible to

reason with. He had nothing to be robbed of, neither had he enemy; as for soul, he never yet had heard of any such ownership. But an unknown latitude of terror overpowered him. Nothing leads a man like fear; and this poor savage, though so naked, was a man of some sort.

Therefore, although he would far liefer have skulked off in the cranny-ing shadows, leaving the moon to see to it, he could by no means find the power to withdraw himself like that. The sound came through the rushes, and between the moonlit hillocks so, that he was bound to follow it. Crouching through the darker seams, and setting down his toe-balls first, as naked feet alone can do, step by step he drew more near, though longing to be further off. And still he heard the heel-struck spade, and then a cast, and then the sullen sound of sand a-sliding. Then he came to a hollow place, and feared to turn the corner.

Being by this time frightened more than any words can set before us, back he stroked his shaggy hair, and in a hat of rushes laid his poor wild face for gazing. And in the depth of the hollow where the moonlight scarcely marked itself, and there seemed a softer herbage than of dry junk-rushes, but the banks combed over so as to bury the whole three fathoms deep at their very first subsiding—a man was digging a small deep grave.

On the slope of the bank, and so as to do no mischief any longer, two little bodies lay put back; not flung anyhow; but laid, as if respect was shown to them. Each had a clean white night-gown on, and lay in decorous attitude, only side by side, and ready to go into the grave together. The man who was digging looked up at them, and sighed at so much necessity; and then fell to again, and seemed desirous to have done with it.

So was the naked man who watched him, fright by this time overcreeping even his very eyeballs. He blessed himself for his harmlessness, and ill-will to discipline, all the way home to his own sand-hill; and a hundredfold when he came to know (after the dregs of fright had cleared) that he had seen laid by for coolness, by this awful gravedigger, the cocked hat of a British Captain in the Royal Navy. This hat he had seen once before, and wondered much at the use of it, and obtained an explanation which he could not help remembering. And fitting this to his own ideas, he was as sure as sure could be, that Captain Bampfylde was the man who was burying the children.

Now when this story reached the ears of poor old Sir Philip, whether before or after his visit to our country matters not, it may be supposed what his feelings were of sorrow and indignation. He sent for this savage, who seemed beyond the rest of his tribe in intelligence, as indeed was plainly shown by his coming to bathe his family, and in spite of all the difference of rank and manner between them, questions manifold he put, but never shook his story. And then he sent to Exeter for a lawyer, thoroughly famous for turning any man inside out and putting what he pleased inside him. But even he was altogether puzzled by this man in the sack, wherein he now lived for decorum's sake, however raw it made him. And the honest fellow said that clothing tempted him so to forsake the truth, when he could not tell his own legs in it, that it sapped all principle.

That question is not for me to deal with, nor even a very much wiser man, except that my glimpses of foreign tribes have all been in favour of nudity. And the opposite prac-

tice is evidently against all the bent of our civilised women, who are perpetually rebelling, and more and more eager to open their hearts to their natural manifestation. For the heart of a woman is not like a man's, "desperately wicked;" and how can they prove this unless they show its usual style of working? Only the other day I saw—but back I must go to the heart of my tale. In a word, this fine male savage convinced every one he came into contact with (which after his bathing was permitted, if the other man bathed afterwards), that truly, surely, and with no mistake he must have seen something. What it was, became naturally quite another question; and upon this head no two people could be found of one opinion. But though it proved an important point, I will not dwell too long on it.

Captain Drake's boat, to my firm belief, never came once up the river now; and I thought that my beautiful young lady seemed a little grieved at this. Every now and then she crossed, on her way to see old women, and even that old Mother Bang; and the French maid became a plague to me. She had laid herself out to obtain me, because of the softness with which I carried her; and her opposition to my quid naturally set her heart all the more upon me. I will not be false enough to say that I did not think of her sometimes, because she really did go on in a tantalising manner. And we seemed to have between us something, when her lady's back was turned. However, she ought to have known that I never mean anything by this; and if she chose to lie back like that, and put her red lips topmost, the least thing she should have done was first to be up to our manners and customs.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.—A FINE OLD GENTLEMAN.

When I came to look round upon this state of things, and consider it, I made up my mind to tempt Providence, or rather perhaps the most opposite Power, by holding on where I was, in spite of the Parson and all his devices. This was a stupid resolve, and one on which he had fully calculated. I was getting a little perhaps fond of Nanette, though not quite so much as she fancied; feeling unable to pin my faith to a thing she had whispered into my ear; to wit, that she would thrice soon inherit one three grand money, hunder thousand, more than one great strong man could leeft. I asked her to let me come and try; and she said it was possible to be. Having a thorough acquaintance with Crappos, and the small wretched particles of their money, I did not attach much importance to this; for I like our King's face, and they have not got it; and they seem to stamp their stuff anyhow. But in spite of all prejudice, it would be well to look a little into it; particularly as this girl (whether right or wrong in thousands) had a figure not to be denied, when you came home to her.

Nevertheless I am not the man to part with myself at random; and there was a good farmer's daughter now, solid, and two-and-thirty—which is my favourite ship to sail in, handy, strong, and with guns well up—this young woman crossed the ferry, at eightpence a-day, for my sake; and I thought of retaining a lawyer to find what might be her prospects. She was by no means bad to look at, when you got accustomed; and her nature very kind, and likely to see to Bunny's clothes; also she never contradicted; which is cotton-wool to one who ever has rheumatics. But I did not wish to

pay six-and-eightpence, and then be compelled to lose eightpence a-day, in order to steer clear of her. So I ferried both her and Nanette alike, and let them encounter one another, and charged no difference in their weight.

Nothing better fits a man, for dealing with the womankind, than to be well up in fish. Now I found the benefit of that knowledge where I never looked for it; and I knew the stale from the fresh—though these come alike in the pickle of matrimony—also (which is far more to the point) the soft roes from the hard roes. These you cannot change; but must persuade yourself to like whichever you happen to get of them. And that you find out afterwards.

While I was dwelling upon these trifles, and getting on well with my serious trade, working my ferry, and catching salmon so as to amaze the neighbourhood, also receiving my well-earned salary from the fair Mistress Isabel, and surprising the public-houses every night with my narratives—in a word, becoming the polar-star of both sides of the river—a thing befell me which was quite beyond all sense of reason.

Through wholesome fear of Parson Chowne, and knowledge of his fire-tricks, I kept the Rose of Devon in a berth of deep fresh water; where a bulk of sand backed up, and left a large calm pool of river. Here the dimpling water scarcely had the life to flow along—when the tide was well away; and scarcely brought a single bubble big enough to break upon us. According to the weather, so the colour of the water was. Only when you understood, it seemed to please you always.

One night I was not asleep, but getting very near it; setting in my mind afloat (as I felt the young tide flowing) thoughts, or dreams, or lighter visions than the lightest dream that flits, of, about, concerning, touching, anyhow regarding, or, in any lightest side-light, gleaming, who can tell, or glancing from the chequers of the day-work. Suddenly a great explosion blew me out of my berth, and filled the whole of the cuddy with blaze and smoke. I lay on the floor half-stunned, and with only sense enough for wondering. Then Providence enabled me, on the strength of the battles I had been through, to get on my elbow, and look around. Everything seemed quite odd and stupid for a little while to me. I neither knew where I was, nor what had happened or would happen me.

It may have been half an hour, or it may have been only half a minute, before I was all alive again, and able to see to the mischief. Then I found that a very rude thing had been done, and a most unclerical action, not to be lightly excused, and wholly undeserved on my part. A good-sized kettle of gunpowder had been cast into my cuddy, possibly as a warning to me; but, to say the least, a dangerous one. My wrath overcame all fear so much, that in spite of the risk of meeting others, I rushed through the smoke and up the ladder, and seized my gun from its sling on the deck, and gazed (or rather I should say stared) in every direction around me. But whether from the darkness of the night, or the stinging and stunning turmoil in my eyes and upon my brain, I could not descry any moving shape, or any living creature. And this even added to my alarm, so that I got very little more sleep that night, I do assure you.

However, I kept my own counsel

about it, even from my lady patroness, resolving to maintain a sharp look-out, and act as behoved a gallant Cymro, thrown among a host of savages. To this intent, I took our tiller, which was just about six feet long, and entirely useless now, and I put a bit of a bottom to it, so as to stand quite decently, and fixed a cross-tressel for shoulders, and then dressed it up so with my old fishing-suit and a castaway hat to encourage my brains, that really, though the thing was so grave, I could not help laughing at myself; in the dusk it was so like me. When the labours of the day were over, and the gleam of the water deadened, I set up this other fine Davy Llewellyn on board the ketch, now here now there, sometimes leaning over the bulwarks in contemplation of the river (which was my favourite attitude, from my natural turn for reflection), sometimes idly at work with a rope, or anything or nothing, only so as to be seen from shore, and expose to the public his whereabouts. Meanwhile I crouched in a ditch hard by, and with both barrels loaded.

You will say this was an unchristian thing, especially as I suspected strongly that my besiegers wore naked backs, and would therefore receive my discharge in full. I will not argue that point, but tell you (in common fairness to myself, and to prevent any slur of the warm affection, long subsisting between all who have cared to listen to me and my free self) that whenever I hoped for a chance at those fellows, I drew the duck-shot from the first barrel, and put a light charge of snipe-shot in, which no man could object to. The second barrel was ready, in case that the worst should come to the worst, as we say.

Now it is a proof of my bad luck, and perhaps of my having done a thing below the high Welsh nature, that Providence never vouchsafed

me a single shot at any one of them. The more trouble I took, the less they came; until I could scarcely crook my fingers through the rheumatics they brought on me. Night after night, I said to myself, "If it only pleases the Lord to save me from the wiles of this anointed one, I vow to go back to my duty, and teach those other young chits of boys their work." For I had observed (though I would not tell it, except in a rheumatic twinge) that even Captain Bampfylde's men had lost the style of drawing oars through the water properly, and as I used to give the tune, five-and-twenty years ago.

It is needless to say, that after all the close actions I have conquered in, a canister of gunpowder was nothing to disturb me. But as they might do worse next time, whether in joke or earnest, I made me a hutch of stout strong oak, also cut the bulk-head out, and freed myself into the hold at once, upon any unjust disturbance. Nigh me was my double gun, heavily shotted at bed-time, and the spar which had knocked down Parson Chowne, and might have to do it again perhaps. And now I began to persuade myself into happy sleep again; for my nature is not vindictive.

One night I lay broad awake, perhaps from having shot a curlew, and eaten him, without an onion sewn inside while roasting, but he had been so hard to shoot that I was full of zeal to dine upon him, and had no onion handy. Whether it were so or not, I lay awake and thought about the strange things now come over me. To be earning money at a very noble rate indeed; to be winning the attentions of it may be ten young women (each of whom believed that never had I been in love before); and to be establishing a business which could scarcely fail of growing to a public-

house with benches and glass windows looking down upon the river; and yet with all this prospect brewing, scarcely to have a moment's peace! What a lucky thing for Parson Chowne that I have no cold black blood in me! In this medley of vague thoughts (such as all men of large brain have, and even myself when the moon ordains it) a strong and good idea struck me, and one to be dwelled upon to-morrow; and if then approved, to be carried out immediately. This was no less than to beg an audience of Sir Philip Bampfylde himself, and tell him all that I ever had seen of Chowne and his devices, and place Sir Philip on his guard, and learn maybe a little of the many things that puzzled me. Of course I had thought of this before; but for several reasons had forborne to carry it any further. In the first place, it seemed such a coarse rude way of meeting plans that should be met with equal stealth and subtlety, unless a man were prepared to own himself vanquished in intelligence. Again, it would have been very difficult to obtain a private interview without some stir concerning it. Moreover, I felt a delicacy with respect to my stewardship on behalf of those two children; for a stranger might not at a glance perceive that prudence and self-denial on my part, which the worrisome frivolousness of the fish had, for the time, frustrated. However, I now perceived that a gentleman of Sir Philip's lofty bearing could not with any grace or dignity allude to his own beneficence; and as for the second difficulty, I might hope for Miss Carey's good offices, while I could no longer think to encounter Chowne with his own weapons, since he had blown me out of bed.

Accordingly I persuaded my beautiful young lady, who had plenty of sense but not much craft, and was

pleased with my straightforwardness, to lead me into Sir Philip's presence in a lonely part of the grounds near the river, to the westward and out of sight of the house; in a word, not far from the Braunton Burrows.

Here the river made a bend and came to the breast of an ancient orchard, rich with grass and thick with trees leafless now, but thickly bearded upon every twig with moss. This was of every form and fashion, and of almost every hue. I had never seen such a freaksome piece of work outside the tropics, although in Devonshire common enough, where the soil is moist and the climate damp. Some of these trees lay down on the ground, as if they were tired of standing, and some were in sitting postures, and some half leaning over; but all alive, in spite of that, and fruitful when it suited them. And everything being neglected now, from want of the Squire's attention, heaps of rosy and golden apples lay where they had been piled to sweat, but never led to the cider-press.

Perceiving no sign of Sir Philip about, and remembering how it was now beginning to draw on for Christmas-time, I felt myself welcome to one or two of these neglected apples; for it was much if nobody of the farmers' wives who crossed the ferry could afford me a goose for Christmas in my solitary hole. And even if all should fail disgracefully of their duty towards me, I had my eye on a nice young bird of more than the average plumpness, who neglected his parents' advice every day, and came for some favourite grass of his, which only grew just on the river's verge, within thirty yards of my fusil. It would have shown low curiosity to ask if he owned an owner. From his independent manner I felt that he must be public property; and I meant to reduce him into possession right early in

the morning of the Saint that was so incredulous. It is every man's duty to treat himself well at the time of the Holy Nativity; and having a knowledge of Devonshire geese, after two months on the stubbles, I could not do better than store in my boat one or two of these dervelict apples.

Never do I see or taste an apple without thinking of poor Bardie. "Appledies," she always called them, and she was so fond of them, and her little white teeth made marks like a small-tooth comb in the flesh of them. I was thinking of her, and had scarcely embarked more than a bushel or so, for sauce, in a little snug locker of my own, when I had the pleasure of seeing the gentleman whom I had come all that way to see.

At my own desire, and through Miss Carey's faith in me, it had not been laid before Sir Philip that I was likely to meet him here; only she had told me when and where to come across him, so as not to be broken in upon. Now he came down the narrow winding walk, at the lower side of the orchard, a path overhanging a little brook which murmured under last summer's growth; and I gazed at him silently for a while, through the bushes that overhung my boat. He was dressed as when I had seen him last through my telescope, at the time we came up the river; that is to say, in black velvet, and with his long sword hanging beside him. A brave, and stately, and noble man, walking through a steady gloom of grief, and yet content to walk alone, and never speak of it.

I leaped through the bush at the river's brink, and suddenly stood before him. He set his calm cold gaze upon me, without a shadow of surprise, as if to say, "You have no business in my private grounds; however, it is not worth speaking of." I made him a low bow with

my hat off; and he moved his own, and was passing on.

"Will your Worship look at me," I said, "and see whether you remember me?" He seemed just a little surprised, and then with his inborn courtesy complied.

"I have seen you before, but I know not where. Sir, I often need pardon now for the weakness of my memory."

In a few short words I brought to his mind that evening visit to my cottage, with Anthony Stew and the yellow carriage.

"To be sure, to be sure! I remember now," he said, with his grave and placid smile: "David Llewellyn! Both good old names, and the latter, I daresay, in your belief, both the older and the better one. I remember your hospitality, your patience, and your love of children. Is there anything I can do for you?"

"No, your Worship, nothing. I am here for your sake only; although if I wanted, I would ask you, having found you so good and kind."

"Whence did you get that expression, my friend? The common usage is 'kind and good;' I once knew a very little child—but I suppose it is the Welsh idiom."

"Your Worship, I can speak English thoroughly; better even than my own language; and all around us the scholarly people have more English than of Welsh. But to let your Worship know my cause to come so much upon you, is of things more to the purpose. I have found a bad man meaning mischief to your Worship."

"It cannot be so," he replied, withdrawing, as if I were taking a liberty; "no doubt but you mean me well, Llewellyn, and yourself believe it. But neither I, nor any one else of all my family, now so small, can have given reason for any ill-will towards us."

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It was not for me to dare to speak, while the General was reflecting thus, as if in his own mind going through every small accident of his life; even the servants he might have discharged; or the land-forces ordered for punishment, whereof to my mind they lack more than they get, and grow their backs up in a manner beyond all perception of discipline.

For my part, I could not help thinking, as I watched him carefully, how low and black must be the nature of the heart that could rejoice in such a man's unhappiness. A man, who at threescore years and five, was compelled to rack his memory (even after being long in uncontrolled authority) to find a time when he might have given cause for private enmity! If I had only enjoyed such chances, I must have had at least a score of strong enemies by this time. Being a little surprised, I looked again and again at his white eyebrows, while his eyes were on the ground; also at his lips and nostrils, which were highly dignified. And I saw, in my dry low way, one reason why he had never given offence. He was perhaps a little scant of humour and of quickness; which two things give more offence to the outer world that has them not, than the longest course of rigid business carried on without them. I have seen a man who could not crack nuts fly into a fury with one who could. And these reflections made me even yet more anxious to serve him, so grave, and calm, and simple-minded, and so patient was his face.

Nevertheless I did not desire, and would at the point of his sword have refused, a halfpenny, for the things of import which I now disclosed to him. He led me to an ancient bench, beneath a well-worn apple-tree; and sat thereon, and even signed for me to sit beside him. My knowledge of his rank would not permit me to do this;

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until I was compelled to argue. A gentleman more shaped and set inside his own opinions, it had never been my luck to have to deal with, now and then. There are men you cannot laugh at, though you get the best of them, unless your conscience works with such integrity as theirs does. And the sense of this, in some way unknown, may have now been over me. How I began it, or even showed my sense of manners, and of all the different rank between us, is beyond my knowledge now; and must have flowed from instinct then. Enough that I did lead Sir Philip to have thoughts, and to hearken me.

With a power not expected by myself at first beginning, while in doubt of throat and words, I contrived to set before him much that had befallen me. Though I never said a word that lay outside my knowledge, neither let a spark of heat find entrance to my mind at all, and would rather speak too little than be thought outrageous, there could be no doubt that my simple way of putting all I had to say moved this lofty man, as if he were one of the children at the well belonging to John the Baptist. I thought of all those pretty dears (as I beheld him listening), and the way they sat around me, and their style of moving toes at any great catastrophe; while they kept their hands and noses under very stiff control; also the universal sigh, when my story killed any one by any means unfit to die; and their pure contempt of the things they suck, the whole while they are swallowing. Sir Philip (to whom my thoughts meant no failure of respect, but feeling of simplicity), this old gentleman let me speak as one well accustomed to lengthiness. But I did my best to keep a small helm, and yards on the creak for bracing.

"If I take you aright," he said, as I drew near the end of my story, "you have not a high opinion of that reverend gentleman, Stoyle Chowne."

"I look upon him, your Worship, as the blackest-hearted son of Belial ever sent into this world."

Sir Philip frowned, as behoved a man accustomed to authority, and only to have little words, half spoken out, before him. But at my time of life, no officer under an admiral on full pay could have any right to damp my power of expression. However, my respect was such for the presence of this noble man, that I rose and made a leg to him.

"I am sorry to say," he answered, bowing to my bow, as all gentlemen must do; "that this is not the first time I have heard unpleasant things about poor Stoyle. He is my godson, and has been almost as one of my own children. I never can believe that he would ever do me injury. If I thought it, I should have to think amiss of almost every one."

He turned away, as if already he had said more than he meant; and feeling how he treated me, as if of his own rank almost, I did not wonder at the tales of men who gave their lives to save him, in the bloody battle-time. Knowing the world as I do, I only sighed, and waited for him.

"You are very good," he said, without a tone of patronage, "to have thought to help me by delivering your opinions. A heavy trouble has fallen upon us, and the goodwill of the neighbourhood has many times astonished me. However, you must indulge no more in any such wild ideas. They all proceed from the evil one, and are his choicest device to lower the value of holy orders. The Reverend Stoyle Chowne descends from a very

good old family, at any rate on his father's side; and he has his dignity to maintain, and his holy office to support him. On this head, I will hear no more."

The General shut his mouth and closed it, so that I could never dare to open mine again to him, con-

cerning this one subject. And his manner stopped me so that I only made my duty. This he acknowledged in a manner which became both him and me; and then he passed through a little gate to his usual walk upon Braunton Burrows.

CHAPTER XXXIX.—NOTICE TO QUIT.

We were now come to the time of year which all good Christians celebrate by goodwill and festivities. Even I, in my humble way, had made some preparation for this holy period, by shooting Farmer Badcock's goose; which had long been in my mind. Upon plucking, he turned out even whiter and better than expectation, and the tender down clung to him, in a way that showed his texture. I hung him up in a fine through-draught, and rejoiced in the thought of him every time my head came in between his legs. Neither did he fall away when he came to roasting.

But when I had put him down, upon the Christmas morning, with intent to stick thereby, and baste him up to one o'clock, dipping bits of bread beneath him, as he might begin to drip, and winning thus foretaste of him—all my plans were overset by a merry party coming, and demanding "ferry." With my lovely goose beginning just to spread his skin a little, and hiss sweetly at the fire, up I ran, with resolution not to ferry anybody, but to cook my goose aright.

Nevertheless it might not be so. Here were three young fellows ramping of the high nobility, swearing to come aboard and stick me, if I would not ferry them. It was not that I feared of this, but that I beheld a guinea spinning in the morning sun, which compelled me

to forego, and leave my poor young goose to roll around, and try to roast himself. Therefore I backed him from the fire, and laid half a pound of slow lard on his breast, and trusted his honour to keep alive.

These young joyous fellows now were awake to everything. They had begun the morning bravely with a cup of rum and lemon, then a tender grill of beef, and a quart of creamy ale, every one accordingly. And they meant to keep the day up to no less a pattern, being all of fine old birth, and bound to act accordingly. However, it had been said by some one, that they ought to go to church; and they happened to feel the strength of this, and vowed that the devil should catch the hindmost, unless they struck out for it.

Hence I came to win the pleasure of their company, that day. Their nearest church was the little, simple, quiet old church at Ashford. From my ferry I could see it; and it often made me sigh, because it looked so tranquil. Sweet green land sloped up towards it, with a trace of crooked footpaths, and the nicks of elbowed hedges, where the cows came down and stood. Also from it, looking downward through the valley of the Tawe, may be seen a spread of beauty, and of soft variety, and of largeness opening larger with the many winding waters, to the ocean unbeheld, that the sternest

man must sigh, and look again, and look again.

A genuine parson now was master of this queer old quiet church ; a man who gave his life entire for the good of other men. In a little hut he lived, which the clerk's house overrode, just at the turning of the lane, upon the steep ascent, and where the thunder-showers flooded it. All the poor folk soon began to dwell upon his noble nature, and to feel that here was some one fit to talk of Saviours. Miles around they came to hear him, so that he was forced to stand on a stool in the porch, and speak to them. For speaking it was, and not preaching ; which made all the difference.

These three gay young sparks leaped lightly into the bow of my ferry-boat, and bade me pull for my very life, unless I desired to be flung into the water then and there. A strong spring-tide was running up, and I was forced to pull the starboard oar with all my might to keep the course. My passengers were carrying on with every sort of quip and crank, and jokes, that made the boat to tilt, when suddenly a rush of water flooded their silk stockings. I thought at first that the bung was out, and told them not to be frightened ; but in another breath I saw that it was a great deal worse than that. The water was rushing in through a mighty hole in the planks of the larboard bow ; and in three minutes we must be swamped. "All aft, all aft in a moment !" I cried ; "it is our only chance of reaching shore." The gallants were sobered at once by fright, and I bundled them into the stern-sheets, sat on the aftmost thwart myself, and for the lives of us all pulled back towards the bank we had lately quitted. By casting all the weight thus astern, I raised the leak up to the water-line, ex-

cept when we plunged to the lift of the oars, and the water poured in less rapidly now, with the set of the tide on our starboard beam. However, with all this, and all my speed, and my passengers showing great presence of mind, we barely managed to touch the bank and jump out, when down she foundered.

At first I was at a loss altogether even to guess how this thing had happened ; for the boat seemed perfectly sound and dry at the time of our leaving the shore. But as soon as the tide was out, and I could get at her, I perceived that a trick of entirely fiendish cunning and atrocity had been played upon me. A piece of planking a foot in length and from eight to ten inches wide had been cut out with a key-hole saw, at the time she was lying high and dry, and doubtless before day-break. This had been then replaced most carefully with a little caulking, so that it was water-tight without strong pressure from outside ; but the villain had contrived it, knowing in what state of tide I was likely next to work the ferry, so that the rush of water could not fail to beat the piece in.

It made my blood run cold to think of the stealthiness of this attempt, as well as the skill it was compassed with, for the chances were ten to one almost in favour of its drowning me, and leaving a bad name behind me too, for having drowned my passengers. And to this it must have come if so much as a single woman had been in the boat that day. For these, when in danger, always do the very worst thing possible ; and the manager of this clever scheme knew of course that my freight was likely, on the Christmas morning, to be chiefly female. Luckily I had refused two boat-loads of young and attractive womankind, not from religious feel-

ing only, but because I had to chop a trencherful of stuffing.

This affair impressed me so with a sense of awe and reverence, and a certainty that Parson Chowne must be in direct receipt of counsel from the evil one, that my mind was good to be off at once, and thank the Lord for escaping him. For let us see what must have happened but for the goodness and fatherly care of a merciful Providence over me. The boat would have sunk in the very midst of the rapid and icy river. David Llewellyn with his accustomed fortitude would have endeavoured to swim ashore, and yet could not have resisted the claims of three or even four young women, who doubtless would have laid hold of him, all screaming, splashing, and dragging him down. The mind refuses to contemplate such a picture any longer!

This matter could not be kept quiet, as the first attempt had been, but spread from house to house, and gained in size from each successive tongue, until the man at the foot of the bridge, who naturally detested me, whispered into every ear, that it was high time to have a care of that interloping Welshman, who had drowned six fine young noblemen, for the sake of their buckles and watches. And my courage was at so low an ebb, that when he retreated into his house, I could not even bring my mind to the power of kicking his door in. Hence that calumny, not being quenched, went the round of the neighbourhood; and I might as well haul down my sign, and the hopes of any public-house became a fading vision. And of all the fine young women who had set their hearts upon keeping it (as I described my intention to them), and who had picked up bits of Welsh, for an access to my heart in all its patriotism, there was not one worth look-

ing at, or fit to be a landlady, who took the trouble to come near me, in the frosty weather.

When a man is forsaken by the world, he must have recourse to reason. And if only borne up thereby, and with a little cash in hand, he can wait till the world comes round again. This was my position now. I never had behaved so well in all my life before, I think; though always conscientious. But of late I had felt, as it were, in one perpetual round of bitter wrestling with the evil one. Men of a loose kind may not see that this was tenfold hard upon me, from my props being knocked away. I mean my entire trust and leaning upon the ancient Church of England, which (perhaps by repulsion from those fellows that came after our old ham, as well as our proper parson's knowledge of soles and the way to fry them) had increased upon me so, that my heart leaped up whenever I heard the swing of a bell on Sunday. Some of this perhaps was owing to my thoughts of Newton clock, and twelve shillings now due to me from my captainship thereof: but how could this loyal and ecclesiastical fervour thrive, while a man in holy orders did such unholy things to me?

The only one with faith enough, and sense enough, to stand by me now, through this bitter trial, was that beautiful young lady, whom I did admire so. And if till now I admired only, now I did adore her. Nanette did for herself with me, and all her hopes of ever being Mrs David Llewellyn, by poking up her little toes,—and I saw that they were all square almost,—and with guttural noises crying that on board my boat she would not dare. Miss Carey laughed at her, and stepped with her beautiful boots on board of me; and from that moment she might do exactly as she pleased with me.

However, my ferry was knocked on the head ; and all the hopes of a wife and family, and even a public-house and skittles, which I had long been building up, as well as to train our Bunny for barmaid ; which must always be done quite young, to get the proper style of it, and thorough acquaintance with measures, how to make them look quite brim up when they are only three-parts full. All golden dreams will vanish thus ; no life of smiling Boniface, but of gun-muzzles was before me ; no casting-up of shot by pence, but ramming down on pounds of powder. Let that pass ; my only wish is to conceal, in the strictest manner, little trifles about myself.

Isabel Carey was so shocked at hearing of our danger (as by me distinctly told without a word of flourish), that she made me promise strongly to give up my ferrying. This I was becoming ready, more and more every day, to do ; especially as nobody ever now came down for portorage. But I told the lady how hard it was to have formed such a valuable trade, or you might say an institution ; and then to lose it all, because of certain private enmities. What she said or did hereon is strictly a family question, and can in no way concern the public, since I hauled my flag down.

And now I gained more insight into my great enemy's schemes and doings, than I could have acquired while engaged so much at ferry. For time allowed me to maintain that strict watch upon Narnton Court which was now become my duty, as well as an especial pleasure, for the following reason. I began to see most clearly that the foul outrage upon my boat must have been perpetrated by one or both of those savage fellows who were employed as spies upon this great house, from the landward side. They must have forded the river, which is not

more than three feet deep in places, when the tide is out, and no floods coming down. These two cunning barbarians came of course from the Nympton rookery, but were lodging for the present in a hole they had scooped for themselves in the loneliest part of Branton Burrows. Of course they durst not go about in a peopled and civilised neighbourhood, with such an absence of apparel as they could indulge at home. Still they were unsightly objects ; and decent people gave them a wide berth, when possible. But my firm intention was to grapple with these savage scoundrels, and to prove at their expense what a civilised Welshman is, and how capable of asserting his commercial privileges. Only as they carried knives, I durst not meet them both at once ; and even should I catch them singly, some care was advisable, so as to take them off their guard ; because I would not lower myself to the use of anything more barbarous than an honest cudgel.

However, although I watched and waited, and caught sight of them more than once, especially at night-time when they roved most freely, it was long before I found it prudent to bear down on the enemy. Not from any fear of them, but for fear of slaying them, as I might be forced to do, if they rushed with steel at me.

One night, after the turn of the days, and with mild weather now prevailing, and a sense of spring already fluttering in the valleys, I sat in a dark embrasure at the end of Narnton Court. There had been more light than usual in the windows of the great dining-room, which now was very seldom used for hospitable purposes. And now two gentlemen came forth, as if for a little air, to take a turn on the river-terrace. It did not cost me long to learn that one was good Sir Philip Bampfylde, and the other that

very wicked Chowne. The latter had manifestly been telling some of his choicest stories, and held the upper hand as usual.

"General, take my arm. The flags are rough, and the night is of the darkest. You must gravel this terrace, for the sake of your guests, after your port-wine."

"Dick," said the General, with a sigh, for he was a most hospitable man, and accustomed to the army; "Dick, thou hast hardly touched my port; and I like not to have it alighted, sir."

What excuse the Parson made I did not hear, but knew already that one of his countless villanies was his rude contempt of the gift of God, as vouchsafed to Noah, and confirmed by the very first rainbow, which continues the colours thereof up to this time of writing.

Sir Philip leaned on the parapet some twenty yards to windward of me, and he sniffed the fine fresh smell of sea-weed and sea-water coming up the river with a movement of four knots an hour. And in his heart he thanked the Lord, very likely, without knowing it. Then he seemed to sigh a little, and to turn to Chowne, and say—

"Dick, this is not as it should be. Look at all this place, and up and down all this length of river; every light you can see burning, is in a house that 'longs to me. And who is now to have it all? It used to make me proud; but now it makes me very humble. You are a parson; tell me, Dick, what have I done to deserve it all?"

The Rev. Richard Stoye Chowne had not—whatever his other vices were—one grain of pious hypocrisy in all his foul composition. If he had, he might have flourished, and with his native power, must have been one of the foremost men of this, or any other age. But his pride allowed him never to let in

pretence religious into the texture of his ways. A worse man need not be desired: and yet he did abhor all cant, to such a degree that he made a mock of his own church-services.

"General, I have nought to say. You have asked this question more than once. You know what my opinion is."

"I know that you have the confidence, sir, every honourable man must have, in my poor son's innocence. You support it against every one."

"Against all the world: against even you, when you allow yourself to doubt it. Tush! I would not twice think of it. However many candles burn"—this was a touch of his nasty sarcasm, which he never could deny himself—"up and down the valley, General, no son of yours, however wild, and troubled in expenditure, could ever shape or even dream of anything dishonourable."

"I hope not—I hope to God, not," Sir Philip said, with a little gasp, as if he were fearing otherwise: "Dick, you are my godson, and you have been the greatest comfort to me; because you never would believe——"

"Not another word, General. You must not dwell on this matter so. The children were fine little dears of course, very clever and very precious——"

"Oh, if you only knew the words, Dick, my little granddaughter could come out with! Scarcely anything you could think of would have been too big for her little mouth. And if she could not do it once, she never left it till she did. Where it came from I could not tell, for we are not great at languages: but it must have been of her mother's race. And the boy, though not with gifts of that sort—oh, you ought to have seen his legs, Dick—

at least till he took the whooping-cough!" The stately old gentleman leaned, and dropped a tear perhaps into the river Tawa.

"General, I understand it all," said Chowne, though he never had a child, by reason of the Almighty's mercy to the next generation: "of course these pretty children were a great delight to every one. But affairs of this sort happen in all ancient families. The mere extent of land appears to open for clandestine graves——"

"That wicked devilish story, Dick! Did you tell me, or did you not, to take it as the Fiend's own lie?"

"A lie, of course, as concerns the Captain: from their want of knowledge. But concerning some one else, true enough, I fear, I fear."

Both men had by this time very nearly said their say throughout. The General seemed to be overcome, and the Parson to be growing weary of a subject often treated in discourse between them. "Before you go in the morning, Dick," said the old man, now recovering, "I wish to consult you about a matter nearly concerning young Isabel. She is a distant cousin of yours. You thoroughly understand the law, of which I have very little knowledge. Perhaps you will meet me in the book-room, for half an hour's quiet talk, before we go to breakfast."

"I cannot do it, Sir Philip. I have my own affairs to see to: I must be off when the moon is up. I cannot sleep in your house, this night."

CHAPTER XL.—FORCIBLE EJECTION.

Those things which have been settled for us by long generations of ancestors, all of whom must have considered the subjects, one after the other, painfully, and brought good minds of ancient strength (less dead away than ours are) to bear upon what lay before them, also living in a time when money went much further, and got a deal more change in honesty, which was then more plentiful—to rush, I say, against the bulwarks of our noble elders (who showed the warmth of their faith by roasting all who disagreed with them), would be, ay and ever will be, a proof of a rebellious, scurvy, and perpetually scabby nature. The above fine reflection came home to me, just as my pipe grew sweet and rich, after an excellent dinner, provided by that most thoughtful and bright young lady, the Honourable Isabel Carey, upon a noble New Year's Day, in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred

and eighty-three. Her ladyship now had begun to feel that interest in my intelligence and unusual power of narrative, as well as that confidence in my honour and extreme veracity, which, without the smallest effort or pretence on my part, seem to spring by some law of nature in every candid mind I meet.

Combining this lady's testimonials, as presented weekly, with some honourable trifles picked up here and there along shore, in spite of all discouragement, perhaps I congratulated myself on having turned the corner of another year not badly. I counted my money, to the tune of five-and-twenty level pounds; an amount of cash beyond all experience! Yet, instead of being dazzled, I began to see no reason for not having fifty. Not that I ever thought of money; but for the sake of the children. The tears came into my eyes, to think of these poor little creatures; Bardie with all her

fount of life sanded up (as one might say) in that old Sker warren ; and Bunny with her strength of feeding weakened over rice and fowl-food ; such as old Charles Morgan kept, who had been known to threaten to feed his family upon sawdust. A most respectable man, as well as churchwarden and undertaker ; but being bred a pure carpenter, he thought (when his money came in fast, and great success surprised him) that Providence would be offended at his waste of sawdust.

Now this was the man who had Bunny to keep, entirely from his own wish of course, or the sense of the village concerning her ; and many times I had been ready to laugh ; and as many times to cry almost, whenever I thought of the many things that were likely to happen between them. To laugh, when I thought of Churchwarden's face regarding our Bunny at breakfast-time, and the way she would say, "I want some more," through his narrow-shouldered children. To cry, when I thought of my dear son's child (and as dear to me as my own almost) getting less of victuals daily, as her welcome should grow staler, and giving way to her old trick of standing on the floor with eyes shut, and with shut mouth to declare, "I won't eat, now you have starved me so ;" and no one in that house with wit to understand and humour her. And then I could see her go to bed, in a violent temper anyhow : and when the wind boxed round to north, I could hear her calling, "Granny."

This very tender state of mind, and sense of domestic memories, seems to have drawn me (so far as I can, in a difficult case, remember it) towards a very ancient inn having two bow-windows. When I entered, no man could be in stricter state of sobriety : and as if it were yesterday, I remember asking the price of every-

thing. The people were even inclined to refuse to draw anything in the small-liquor line for a man with so little respect for trade as to walk so straight upon New Year's Day. After a little while, I made them see that this was not so much my fault as my misfortune ; and when I declared my name, of course, and my character came forward, even rum-shrub out of a cask with golden hoops around it scarcely seemed to be considered good enough for me, gratis. But throughout the whole of this, I felt an anxious and burning sense of eager responsibility, coupled with a strong desire to be everywhere at once.

Right early, to the very utmost of my recollection, I tumbled into my lonely berth, after seeing my fusil primed, and praying to the Lord for guidance through another and a better year. I had clean sheets, which are my most luxurious gift of feeling ; and having no room to stretch my legs, or roll, I managed space to yawn, and then went off deliciously. Now I was beginning to dream about the hole I had placed my money in—a clever contrivance of my own, and not in the cuddy at all, because the enemy might attack me there—when a terrible fit of coughing came and saved my life by waking me. The little cuddy was full of smoke—parching, blinding, choking smoke—so thick that I could scarcely see the red glare of fire behind it, through the brattice of the bulkhead.

"Good Lord," I cried, "have mercy on me ! Sure enough, I am done for now. And nobody ever will know or care what the end was of old Dyo !"

I did not stop still to say all this, that you may be quite sure of ; and it argues no small power of speech that I was able to say anything. For with a last desire for life, and despairing resolve to try again, I

broke my knuckles against the hatch which I had made so heavy for the purpose of protecting me. To go out through my door would have been to rush into the fire itself; and what with the choking, and the thickness, and the terror of the flames violently reddening and roaring a few feet away, I felt my wits beginning to fail me, which of course was certain death. So I sat down on a three-legged stool, which was all my furniture; and for a moment the rushing smoke drew, by some draught, elsewhere; and whether I would or no, a deal of my past life came up to me. I wondered whether I might have been too hard sometimes on any one, or whether I might have forgotten to think of the Lord, upon any Sunday. And then my thoughts were elevated to the two dear children.

Now what do you think happened to me, when I thought of those two darlings, and the tears from smoke made way for the deep-born tears of a noble heart? Why simply that a flash of flame glanced upon the iron crowbar, wherewith I had opened hatch. I could not have been in pure bright possession of my Maker's gifts to me when I chanced, before going to bed, to lay that crowbar for my pillow-case. Nevertheless I had done it well: and in the stern perception of this desperate extremity, I could not help smiling at the way I had tucked up my head on the crowbar. But (though no time is lost in smiling) I had not a moment to lose even now, although with my utmost wits all awake and coughing. I prised the hatch up in half a moment, where it was stuck in the combings; and if ever a man enjoyed a draught, I did so of air that moment. Many men might have been frightened still, and not have known what to do with themselves. But I assure you, in all honour, that the whole

of my mind came back quite calmly, when I was out of smothering. People may say what they like; but I know, after seeing every form of death (and you need not laugh at me very much, if I even said feeling it)—I know no anguish to be compared to the sense of being pressed under slowly; and the soul with no room to get away.

But I was under the good stars now, and able to think and to look about; and though the ketch could not last long, being of 92 tons only, I found time enough to kneel and thank my God for His mercy to me. There was no ice in the river now, and to swim ashore would have been but little, except for rheumatics afterwards. But it seemed just as well to escape even these; and having been burned out at sea before, I was better enabled to manage it. The whole of the waist of the ketch was in flames, curling and beginning now to indulge their desire of roaring; but the kindness of the Lord prevented wind from blowing. Had there been only a four-knot breeze, you would never have heard of me again; surely which would grieve you.

In this very sad state of mind, combined with a longing for thankfulness, and while I was thinking about the fire—to say the truth, very stupidly, and wondering instead of working—quite an old-fashioned affair restored me to my wits and my love of the world again. This was the strong sour sound of the air, when a bullet comes through it hastily, and casting reproach upon what we breathe, for its want of a stronger activity. A man had made a shot at me, and must have been a lubber by his want of range and common-sense. Before I could think, I was all alive, and fit to enjoy myself almost, as if it were a fight with Frenchmen. The first thing I thought of was the gun lent

to me by Miss Carey. To rescue this, I went down even into the cuddy which had so lately proved my very grave almost: and after this I saw no reason why I should not save my money, if the Lord so willed it. From a sense of all the mischief even now around me, I had made a clever hole in the bow-knees of the ketch (where the wood lay thickest), and so had plugged my money up, with the power to count it daily. And now in spite of flame, and roar, and heat of all the 'midships, and the spluttering of the rock-powder bags too wet to be unanimous, I made my mind up just to try to save my bit of money.

Because, although a man may be as coarse, and wicked, and vile-hearted, as even my very worst enemies are, he cannot fail of getting on, and being praised, and made the best of, if he only does his best to stick tight to his money. Therefore having no boat within reach, and the 'midship all aflame, I made a raft of the cuddy-hatch, and warped along by the side of the ketch, and purchased my cash from its little nest; and then with a thankful heart, and nothing but a pair of breeches on, made the best of my way ashore, punting myself with a broken oar.

This desire to sacrifice me (without the trouble even taken to count what my value was), gave me such a sense of shock, and of spreading abroad everywhere, without any knowledge left of what might have become of me, and the subject liable to be dropped, if ever entered into by a Jolly Crowner, and a jury glad to please him, that for the moment I sat down upon a shelf of clay, until the wet came through my want of clothes. Suddenly this roused me up to make another trial for the sake of my well-accustomed and familiar suit of clothes, so well beloved; also even my Sunday

style, more striking but less comfortable; in lack of which the world could never have gone on in our neighbourhood. Therefore I ran to my little punt, and pushed off, and was just in time to save my kit, with a little singeing.

The ketch burned down to the water's edge, and then a rough tide came up and sank her, leaving me in a bitter plight, and for some time quite uncertain how to face the future. From knowledge of the Parson's style of treating similar cases, I felt it to be a most likely thing that I should be charged with firing her, robbing her, and concealing booty. And this injustice added to the bitterness of my close escape. "It is no use," I said aloud; "it is useless to contend with him. He has sold himself to Satan, and thank God I have no chance with him." Therefore by the time the fire had created some disturbance in the cottage bedrooms, I had got my clothing on, in a decent though hasty manner, and slipped into a little wood with my spy-glass happily saved, and resolved to watch what happened in among the bumpkins.

These came down, and stared and gawked, and picked up bits of singed spars, and so on, and laid down the law to one another, and fought for the relics, and thought it hard that no man's body was to be found with clothes on. I saw them hunting for me, up and down the river channel, with a desperate ignorance of tide (although living so close to it), and I did not like to have my body hunted for like that. But I repressed all finer feelings, as a superior man must do, and chewed the tip of a bullock's tongue, which luckily was in my waistcoat-pocket ready for great emergency; and which if a man keeps going on with, he may go like the great Elijah forty days, and feel no hunger. At least I have heard so, and

can believe it, having seen men who told me so; but I would rather have it proved by another man's experience.

While I was looking on at these things, down came Parson Chowne himself, in a happy mood, and riding the black mare, now brought out of dock again. The country folk all fell away from their hope of stealing something, and laid fingers to their hats, being afraid to talk of him. He, however, did no more than sign to the serving-man behind him, to acknowledge compliments (which was outside his own custom), and then he put spurs to his horse and galloped right and left through the lot of them. In my anxiety to learn what this dreadful man was up to, I slipped down through the stubs of the wood, where the faggot-cutters had been at work, gliding even upon my jersey, because of the Parson's piercing eyes, and there in the ditch I found some shelter, and spied through a bushy breastwork.

"No more than I expected," he cried, "from what I have seen of the fellow; he has fired the ship, and run away with all he could lay hands on. As a Justice of the Peace I offer ten pounds reward for David Llewellyn, brought before me, alive or dead. Is there one of you rantipoles can row? Oh, you can. Take this shilling, and be off with that big thief's ferry-boat, and leave it at Sam Tucker's shipyard, in the name of the Reverend Stoye Chowne."

It went to my heart that none of the people to whom I had been so "good and kind"—to use pretty Bardie's phrase—now had the courage to stand up, and say that my character was most noble, and claim back my boat for me. Instead of that, they all behaved as if I had never ferried them; and the ingratitude of the young women made me long to be in Wales again. Be-

cause, you may say what you like; but the first point in our people is gratitude.

"Of course," cried Chowne, and his voice, though gently used, came down the wind like a bell; "of course, good people, you have not found the corpse of that wretched villain."

"Us would giv' un up, glad enough, if us only gat the loock, for tan zhilling, your Raverance. Lave aloun tan poond."

When that miserable miser said a thing so low as that, my very flesh crept on my bones, and my inmost heart was sick with being made so very little of. To myself I always had a proper sense of estimation; and to be put at this low figure made me doubt of everything. However, I came to feel, after a bit, that this is one of the trials which all good men must put up with: neither would a common man find his corpse worth ten pounds sterling.

Betwixt my sense of public value (a definite sum, at any rate) and imagination of what my truly natural abilities might lead me to, if properly neglected, I found it a blessed hard thing to lie quiet until dark, and then slip out. And the more so, because my stock of food was all consumed by middle day; and before the sun went down, hunger of a great shape and size arose and raged within me. This is always difficult to discipline or to reason with; and to men of the common order it suggests great violence. To me it did nothing of that kind, but led me into a little shop, where I paid my money, and got my loaf. My flint and steel and tinder-box lay in my pocket handy. These I felt and felt again, and went into the woods and thought, and found that even want of food had failed to give me thorough-going and consistent appetita. Because, for the first time in my life, I had shaped a strong resolve, and

sworn to the Lord concerning it—to commit a downright crime, and one which I might be hanged for. Although every one who has entered into my sufferings and my dignity must perceive how right I was, and would never inform against me, I will only say that on Saturday evening Parson Chowne had fourteen ricks, and on Sunday morning he had none, and might begin to understand the feelings of the many farmers who had been treated thus by him. Right gladly would I have beheld his face (so rigid and contemptuous at other people's trouble) when he should come to contemplate his own works thus brought home to him. But I could not find a hedge thick enough to screen me from his terrible piercing eyes.

This little bit of righteous action made a stir, you may be sure, because it was so contrary to the custom of the neighbourhood. Although I went to see this fire, I took the finest care to leave no evidence behind me; and even turned my bits of toggery inside out at starting. But there was a general sense in among these people, that only a foreigner could have dared to fly in the Parson's face so. I waited long enough to catch the turn of the public feeling, and finding it set hard against me, my foremost thought was the love of home.

Keeping this in view, and being pressed almost beyond bearing now, with no certainty, moreover, as to warrants coming out, and the people looking strangely, every time they met me, I could have no peace until I saw the beautiful young lady, and to her told everything. You should have seen her eyes and cheeks, as well as the way her heart went; and the pride with which she gathered all her meaning up to speak; even after I had told her how the ricks would burn themselves.

"You dear old Davy," she said,

"I never thought you had so much courage. You are the very bravest man—but stop, did you burn the whole of them?"

"Every one burned itself, your ladyship; I saw the ashes dying down, and his summer-house as well took fire, through the mischief of the wind, and all his winter stock of wood, and his tool-house, and his——"

"Any more, any more, old David?"

"Yes, your ladyship, his cow-house, after the cows were all set free, and his new cart-shed fifty feet long, also his carpenter's shop, and his cider-press."

"You are the very best man," she answered, with her beautiful eyes full upon me, "that I have seen, since I was a child. I must think what to do for you. Did you burn anything more, old Davy?"

"The fire did, your ladyship, three large barns, and a thing they call a 'linhay;' also the granary, and the meal-house, and the apple-room, and the churn-room, and only missed the dairy by a little nasty slant of wind."

"What a good thing you have done! There is scarcely any man I know, that would have shown such courage. Mr Llewellyn, is there anything in my power to do for you?"

Nothing could have pleased me more than to find this fair young lady rejoicing in this generous manner at the Parson's misadventure. And her delight in the contemplation made me almost feel repentance at the delicate forbearance of the flames from the Rectory itself. But I could not help reflecting how intense and bitter must be this young harmless creature's wrong received and dwelling in her mind, ere she could find pleasure from wild havoc and destruction.

"There is one thing you can do,"

I answered very humbly ; "and it is my only chance to escape from misconstruction. I never thought, at my time of life, to begin life so again. But I am now a homeless man, burned out of my latest refuge, and with none to care for me. Perhaps I may be taken up to-morrow, or the next day. And with such a man against me, it must end in hanging."

"I never heard such a thing," she said : "he tries to burn you in your bed, after blowing you up, and doing his very best to drown you ; and then you are to be hanged because there is a bonfire on his premises ! It is impossible, Mr Llewellyn, to think twice of such a thing."

"Your ladyship may be right," I answered ; "and in the case of some one else, reasoning would convince me. But if I even stop to think twice, it will lead to handcuffs ; and handcuffs lead to halter."

At this she began to be frightened much, and her fright grew worse, as I described the unpleasantness of hanging ; how I had helped myself to run up nine good men at the yard-arm. And a fine thing for their souls, no doubt, to stop them from more mischief, and let them go up while the Lord might think that other men had injured them.

"Your ladyship," I began again, when I saw all her delicate colour ebbing ; "it is not for a poor hunted man to dare to beg a favour."

"Oh yes, it is, it is," she cried ; "that is the very time to do it. Anything in my power, David, after all you have done for me."

"Then all that I want of your ladyship is to get me rated aboard of Captain Drake Bampfylde's ship."

She coloured up so clearly that I was compelled to look away : and then she said—

"How do you know—I mean who can have told you that—but are you not too—perhaps a little——"

"Too old, your ladyship ? Not a day. I am worth half-a-dozen of those young chips who have got no bones to their legs yet. And as for shooting, if his Honour wants a man to train a cannon, I can hit a marlinspike with a round-shot, at a mile and a half, as soon as I learn the windage."

For I knew by this time that Captain Bampfylde's ship, the *Alcestis*, was in reserve, as a feeder for the Royal Navy, to catch young hands and train them to some knowledge of sea-life, and smartness, and the styles of gunnery. And who could teach them these things better than a veteran like me ?

Miss Carey smiled at my conceit, as perhaps she considered it ; "Well, Davy, if you can fire a gun, as well as you can a hay-rick——"

"No more, your ladyship, I beseech you. Even walls like these have ears ; and every time I see my shadow, I take it for a constable. I am sure there are two men after me——"

"Have you then two shadows ?" she asked, in her peculiar pleasant way : "at any rate no one will dare to meddle with you, or any of us, I should hope, in the General's own house. Come in here. I expect, or at least I think, there is some prospect of a boat from the *Alcestis* coming up the river this very evening. Perhaps you have some baggage."

"No, your ladyship, not a bit. They burned me out of all of it. But I saved some money kindly, by special grace of God, at the loss of all my leg-hair."

I ought not to have said that, I knew, directly after uttering it, to a young lady who could not yet be up to things of that kind.

CHAPTER XL.—THE RIGHT MAN IN THE RIGHT PLACE.

The very next day, I was afloat as a seaman of the Royal Navy of the United Kingdom. None but a sailor can imagine what I felt and what I thought. Here for years I had been adrift from the very work God shaped me for, wrecked before my time by undue violence of a Frenchman. Also I had bred my son up to supply my place a little ; and a very noble fellow, though he could not handle cutlash or lay gun as I had done. But he might have come to it if he ever had come to my own time of life. This however had been cut short by the will of Providence ; and now I felt bound to make good for it. Only one thing grieved me, viz., to find the war declining. This went to my heart the more, because our navy had not done according to its ancient fame, anywhere but at Gibraltar and with Admiral Rodney, in the year before I rejoined it. Off the coast of America, things I could not bear to hear ; also the loss of the Royal George, the capture of the Leeward Islands, and of Minorca by the French ; and even a British sloop of war taken by a French corvette. Such things moved me to the marrow, after all I had seen and done ; and all our ship's company understood that I returned to the service in the hope to put a stop to it. This reclaiming of me to the thing that I was meant for took less time than I might use to bring a gun to its bearings. That beautiful Miss Carey managed everything with Captain Drake, and in less than fifty kisses, they had settled my affairs. I could have no more self-respect, if I said another word.

But the King and the nation won the entire benefit of this. It came to pass that I was made a second in-

structor in gunnery, with an entire new kit found me, and six and-two-pence a-week appointed, together with second right to stick a fork into the boiler. Of course I could not have won all this by favour ; but showed merit. It had however been allowed me, under an agreement (just enough, yet brought about by special love of justice) that I should receive a month ashore at Newton-Nottage, in the course of the spring, whenever it might suit our cruising. My private affairs demanded this ; as well as love of neighbours, and strong desire to let them know how much they ought to make of me.

How I disdained my rod and pole, and the long-shore life and the lubberly ways, when I felt once more the bounding of the open water, the spring of the buoyant timbers answering every movement gallantly, the generous vehemence of the canvas, and the noble freedom of the ocean winds around us ! The rush up a liquid mountain, and the sway on the balance of the world, then the plunge into the valley, almost out of the sight of God, though we feel Him hovering over us. While the heart leaps with the hope of yet more glorious things to come—the wild delight, the rage, suspense, and majesty of battle.

Nothing vexed me now so much as to hear from private people, and even from the public sailors, that the nation wanted peace. No nation ever should want peace, until it has thoroughly thrashed the other, or is bound by wicked luck to knock under hopelessly. And neither of those things had befallen England at this period. But I have not skill enough to navigate in politics. And before we had been long at

sea, we spoke a full-rigged ship from Hamburg, which had touched at Falmouth; and two German boys, in training for the British Navy, let us know that peace was signed between Great Britain, France, and Spain, as nearly as might be on Valentine's Day of the year 1783. A sad and hard thing we found to believe it, and impossible to be pleased after such practice of gunnery.

Nevertheless it was true enough, and confirmed by another ship; and now a new Ministry was in office under a man of the name of Fox, doubtless of that nature also, ready always to run to earth. Nothing more could be hoped except to put up with all degradation. A handful of barbarous fellows, wild in the woods and swamps of America, most of them sent from this home-country through their contempt of discipline, fellows of this sort had been able (mainly by skulking and shirking fight) to elude and get the better of His Britannic Majesty's forces, and pretend to set up on their own account, as if they could ever get on so. No one who sees these things as clearly as I saw them then and there, can doubt as to the call I felt to rejoin the Royal Navy.

Of course I could not dream that now there was rising in a merchant-ship captured from the Frenchmen, and fitted with two dozen guns, a British Captain such as never had been seen before, nor will ever be again; and whose skill and daring left the Frenchmen one hope only—to run ashore, and stay there.

However, not to dwell too long on the noblest and purest motives, it did not take me quite three weeks to supersede the first instructor, and to get him sent ashore, and find myself hoisted into his berth, with a rise of two-and-two per week. This gave me eight-and-fourpence, with another stripe on my right arm, and what was far more to the purpose,

added greatly to the efficiency of the British Navy. Because the man was very well, or at any rate well enough, in his way and in his manners, and quite worth his wages; but to see him train a gun, and to call him first Instructor! Captain Bampfylde saw, in twenty minutes, that I could shoot this fine fellow's head off, unwilling as I was to give offence, and delicate about priming. And all the men felt at once the power of a practised hand set over them. I saw that the Navy had fallen back very much in the matter of gunnery, in the time of the twenty years, or so, since I had been Gun-captain; and it came into my head to show them many things forgotten. The force of nature carried me into this my proper position; and the more rapidly, because it happened to occur to me that here was the very man pointed out, as it were by the hand of Providence, for Parson Chowne to blow up next. Our Captain had the very utmost confidence that could be in him, and he stood on his legs with a breadth that spoke to the strength of his constitution; a man of enduring gravity. Also his weight was such that the Parson never could manage to blow him up, with any powder as yet admitted into the Royal Dock-yards. I liked this man, and I let him know it; but I thought it better for him to serve his country on shore a little, after being so long afloat; if (as I put it to his conscience) he could keep from poaching, and from firing stackyards, or working dangerous ferries. He told me that he had no temptation towards what I had mentioned; but on the other hand felt inclined, after so many years at sea, to have a family of his own; and a wife, if found consistent. This I assured him I could manage; and in a few words did so; asking for nothing more on his part than entire confi-

dence. My nature commanded this from him; and we settled to exchange our duties in a pleasant manner. I gave him introduction to the liveliest of the farmers' daughters, telling him what their names were. And being over-full of money, he paid me half-a-crown apiece, for thirteen girls to whom I gave him letters of commendation. This was far too cheap, with all of them handsomer than he had any right to; and three of them only daughters, and two with no more than grandmothers. But I love to help a fellow-sailor; and thus I got rid of him. For our Captain had the utmost faith in this poor man's discretion, and had thought, before I said it, of laying him up at Narnton Court, to keep a general look-out, because his eyes were failing. I did not dare to offer more opinion than was asked for, but it struck me that if Parson Chowne had been too clever for David Llewellyn, and made the place too hot for him, he was not likely to be outwitted by Naval Instructor Heaviside.

However, I could not see much occasion for Chowne to continue his plots any longer, or even to keep watch on the house, unless it were from jealousy of our Captain's visits. As far as any one might fathom that unfathomable Parson, he had two principal ends in view. The first was to get possession of Miss Carey and all her property, by making her Mrs Chowne, No. 4; the second, which would help him towards the first, was to keep up against poor Captain Drake the horrible charge of having killed those two children, whose burial had been seen as before related. And here I may mention what I had forgotten, through entire want of vindictive feeling—to wit, that I had, as a matter of duty, contrived to thrash very heavily both of those fellows on Braunton Burrows, who had been spying on

Narnton Court, and committed such outrages against me. Without doing this, I could not have left the county conscientiously.

And now on board the *Alcestis*, a rattling fine frigate of 44 guns, it gave me no small pleasure to find that (although the gunnery practice was not so good as I was accustomed to), in seamanship, and discipline, and general smartness, there was little to be reasonably complained of; especially when it was borne in mind what our special duty was, and why we were kept in commission when so many other ships were paid off, at the conclusion of the war. Up to that time the *Alcestis* had orders to cruise off the western coasts, not only on account of some French privateers which had made mischief with our shipping, but also as a draft-ship for receiving and training batches of young hands, who were transferred, as occasion offered, to Halifax, or the West Indies station. And now as the need for new forces ceased, Captain Drake was beginning to expect orders for Spithead to discharge. Instead of that, however, the Admiralty had determined to employ this ship, which had done so much in the way of education, for the more thorough settlement of a question upon which they differed from the general opinion of the Navy, and especially of the Ordnance Board. This was concerning the value of a new kind of artillery invented by a clever Scotchman, and called a "Carronade," because it was cast at certain iron-works on the banks of the river Carron. This gun is now so thoroughly well known and approved, and has done so much to help us to our recent triumphs, that I need not stop to describe it, although at first it greatly puzzled me. It was so short, and light, and handy, and of such large caliber, moreover with a great chamber for the powder,

such as a mortar has, that at first it quite upset me, knowing that I must appear familiar, yet not being so. However, I kept in the background, and nodded and shook my head so that every one misunderstood me differently.

That night I arose and studied it, and resolved to back it up, because only Captain Drake was in its favour, and the first lieutenant. Heavieside was against it strongly, although he said that six months ago the *Rainbow*, an old 44, being refitted with nothing else but carronades of large caliber, had created such terror in a French ship of almost equal force, that she fired a broadside of honour, and then surrendered to the *Rainbow*. But to come back to our *Alcestis*, at the time I was promoted to first place in gunnery. Over and above her proper armament of long guns, eighteen and twelve pounders, she carried on the quarter-deck six 24-pounder carronades, and two of 18 in the fore-castle. So that in truth she had fifty-two guns, and was a match in weight of metal for a French ship of sixty guns, as at that time fitted. Afterwards it was otherwise; and their artillery outweighed ours, as much as a true Briton outweighs them.

Now Naval Instructor Mr Llewellyn had such a busy time of it, and was found so indispensable on board the *Alcestis*, that I do assure you they could not spare him for even a glimpse of old Newton-Notage, until the beginning of the month of May. But as I always find that people become loose in their sense of duty, unless girt up well with money (even as the ancients used to carry their cash in their girdles), I had taken advantage of a run ashore at Pembroke, to send our excellent Parson Lougher a letter containing a £5 note, as well as a few words about my present position, authority, and estimation. I

trusted to him as a gentleman not to speak of those last matters to any untrustworthy person whatever; because there would be six months' pension falling due to me at Swansea, at the very time of writing; and which of course I meant to have; for my zeal in overlooking my wound could not replace me unwounded, I trow. But knowing our Government to be thoroughly versed in every form of stinginess and speculation (which was sure to be doubled now a Fox was in), I thought that they might even have the dishonesty to deny me my paltry pittance on account of ancient merit and great valour, upon the shabby plea that now I was on full pay again! They would have done so, I do believe, if their own clumsy and careless ways had allowed them to get scent of it. But they do things so stupidly, that a clever man need never allow them to commit roguery upon him. And by means of discreet action, I was enabled for fourteen years, to draw the pension I had won so nobly, as well as the pay I was earning so grandly. However, these are trifles.

The £5 note was for Mother Jones, to help our Bunny with spring-clothes, and to lay out at her discretion for my grandchild's benefit, supposing (as I must needs suppose) that Churchwarden Morgan, in face of his promise, would refuse indignantly to accept a farthing for the child's nourishment. He disappointed me, however, by accepting four pound ten, and Mrs Jones was quite upset; for even Bunny never could have eaten that much in the time. Charles was a worthy man enough (as undertakers always are), but it was said that he could not do according to his lights, when fancy brought his wife across them. Poor Mother Jones was so put out, that she quite forgot what she was doing until she had spent the ten shillings of change in drawers

for her middle children. And so poor Bunny got nothing at all; nor even did poorer Bardie. For this little dear I had begged to be bought, for the sake of her vast imagination, nothing less than a two-shilling doll, jointed both at knee and elbow, as the Dutchmen turn them out. It was to be naked (like Parson Chowne's folk), but with the girls at the well stirred up to make it more becoming. And then Mother Jones was to go to Sker, and in my name present it.

All things fail, unless a man himself goes and looks after them. And so my £5 note did; and when I was able to follow it, complaint was too late, as usual. But you should have seen the village on the day when our Captain Drake—as we delighted to call him—found himself for the first time able to carry out his old promise to me, made beneath the very eyes of his true love, Isabel. The thought of this had long been chafing in between his sense of honour, and of duty set before him by the present Naval Board. And but for his own deeper troubles, though I did my best for ease, he must have felt discomfort. If I chose, I could give many tokens of what he thought of me, not expressed, nor even hinted; yet to my mind palpable. But as long as our Navy lasts, no man will dare to intrude on his Captain.

Be it enough, and it was enough, that his Majesty's 44-gun ship *Alcestis* brought up, as near as her draught allowed, to Porthcawl Point, on the 5th of May 1783. This was by no means my desire, because it went against my nature to exhibit any grandeur. And I felt in my heart the most warm desire that Master Alexander Macraw might happen to be from home that day. Nothing could have grieved me more, than for a man of that small nature to behold me stepping

up in my handsome uniform, with all the oars saluting me, and the second lieutenant in the stern-sheets crying, "Farewell, Mr David!" also officership marked upon every piece of my clothes in sight; and the dignity of my bearing not behind any one of them. But as my evil luck would have it, there was poor Sandy Mac himself, and more half-starved than ever. Such is the largeness of my nature, that I sank all memory of wrongs, and upon his touching his hat to me I gave him an order for a turbot, inasmuch as my clothes were now too good, and my time too valuable, to permit of my going fishing.

This, however, was nothing at all, compared with what awaited me among the people at the well. All Newton was assembled there to welcome and congratulate me, and most of them called me "Captain Llewellyn," and every one said I looked ten years younger in my handsome uniform. I gave myself no airs whatever—that I leave for smaller men—but entered so heartily into the shaking of hands, that if I had been a pump, the well beneath us must have gone quite dry. But all this time I was looking for Bunny, who was not among them: and presently I saw short legs of a size and strength unparalleled, except by one another, coming at a mighty pace down the yellow slope of sand, and scattering the geese on the small green patches. Mrs Morgan had kept her to smarten up,—and really she was a credit to them, so clean, and bright, and rosy-faced. At first she was shy of my grand appearance; but we very soon made that right.

Now I will not enlarge upon or even hint at the honour done me for having done such honour to my native place, because as yet I had done but little, except putting that coat on, to deserve it. Enough that

I drew my salary for attending to the old church clock, also my pension at Swansea, and was feasted and entertained, and became for as long as could be expected the hero of the neighbourhood. And I found that Mother Jones had kept my cottage in such order, that after a day or two I was able to go to Sker for the purpose of begging the favour of a visit from Bardie.

But first, as in duty bound, of course, I paid my respects to Colonel Lougher. As luck would have it, both the worthy Colonel and Lady Bluett were gone from home; but my old friend Crumpy, their honest butler, kindly invited me in, and gave me an excellent dinner in his own pantry; because he did not consider it proper that an officer of the Royal Navy should dine with the maids in the kitchen, however unpretending might be his behaviour. And here, while we were exchanging experience over a fine old cordial, in bursts the Honourable Rodney, without so much as knocking at the door. Upon seeing me his delight was such that I could forgive him anything; and his admiration of my dress, when I stood up and made the salute to him, proved that he was born a sailor. A fine young fellow he was as need be, in his twelfth year now, and come on a mitching expedition from the great grammar-school at Cowbridge. To drink his health, both Crumpy and myself had courage for another glass; and when I began to tell sea-stories, with all the emphasis and expression flowing out of my uniform, he was so overpowered that he insisted on a hornpipe. This, although it might be now considered under dignity, I could not refuse as a mark of respect for him, and for the service; and when I had executed, as perhaps no other man can, this loyal and inimitable dance, his feel-

ings were carried away so strongly that he offered all the money left him by a course of school-work (and amounting to fourpence-halfpenny) if I would only agree to smuggle him on board our *Alcestis*, when she should come to fetch me.

This, of course, I could not think of, even for a hundred pounds; and much as I longed for the boy to have the play of his inclination. And in the presence of Crumpy too, who, with all his goodwill to me, would be sure to give evidence badly, if his young master were carried away! And under such love and obligation to the noble Colonel, I behaved as a man should do, when having to deal with a boyish boy; that is to say, I told his guardians on the next opportunity.

But to break away at once from all these trifling matters, only one day came to pass before I went for Bardie. All along the sea-coast I was going very sadly; half in hopes, but more in fear, because I had bad news of her. What little they could tell at Newton was that Delushy was almost dead, by means of a dreadful whooping-cough, all throughout the winter, and the small caliber of her throat. And Charles Morgan had no more knowledge of my warm feeling thitherway, than to show me that he had been keeping some boards of sawn and seasoned elm, two feet six in length, and in breadth ten inches, from what he had heard about her health, and the likelihood of her measurement. When I heard this, you might knock me down, in spite of all my uniform, with a tube of macaroni. People have a foolish habit, when a man comes home again, of keeping all the bad news from him, and pushing forward all the good. If this had not been done to me, I never could have slept a wink, ere going to Sker Manor.

To me that old house always seemed even more desolate and forlorn with the summer sunshine on it, than in the fogs and storms of winter; perhaps from the bareness of the sand-hills, and the rocks, and dry-stone walls, showing more in the brightness, and when woods and banks are fairest. I looked in vain for a moving creature; there seemed to be none for miles around except a sullen cormorant sleeping far away at sea. Only little Dutch was howling in some lonely corner slowly, as when her five young masters died.

As I approached the door in fear of being too late to say good-bye to my pretty little one, yet trying to think how well it might be for her poor young life to flutter to some guardian angel, my old enemy Black Evan stood and barred the way for me. I doubt if he knew me, at first sight; and beyond any doubt at all, I never should have known him, if I had chanced to meet him elsewhere. For I had not set eyes on his face from the day when he frightened us so at the Inquest; and in those ten months, what a change from rugged strength to decrepitude!

"You cannot see any one in this house," he said very quietly, and of course in Welsh; "every one is very busy, and in great trouble every one."

"Evan black, I feel sorrow for you. And have felt it, through all your troubles. Take the hand of a man who is come with goodwill, and to help you."

He put out his hand, and its horn was gone. I found it flabby, cold, and trembling. A year ago he had been famous for crushing everything in his palm.

"You cannot help us; neither can any man born of a woman," he answered, with his black eyes big with tears: "it is the will of the Lord to slay all whom He findeth dear to me."

"Is Delushy dead?" I asked, with a great sob rising in my throat, like wadding rammed by an untaught man.

"The little sweetheart is not yet dead; but she cannot live beyond the day. She lies panting with lips open. What food has she taken for five days?"

Any one whose nature leads him to be moved by little things would have been distressed at seeing such a most unlucky creature finishing her tender days in that quiet childish manner, among strangers' tenderness. In her weak, defeated state, with all her clever notions gone, she lay with a piece of striped flannel round her, the lips, that used to prattle so, now gasping for another breath, and the little toes that danced so, limp, and frail, and feebly twitching. The tiny frame was too worn to cough, and could only shudder faintly, when the fit came through it. Yet I could see that the dear little eyes looked at me, and tried to say to the wandering wits that it was Old Davy; and the helpless tongue made effort to express that love of beauty, which had ever seemed to be the ruling baby passion. The crown and stripes upon my right arm were done in gold—at my own expense, for Government only allowed yellow thread. Upon these her dim eyes fastened, with a pleasure of surprise; and though she could not manage it, she tried to say, "How boofely!"

QUINET'S 'CREATION.'

For thirty years the tide of the natural sciences has been rising. Wave after wave, and year after year, it still steadily gains ground in regions far removed from all immediate pressure of that great deep which is for ever drawing into its profound and mysterious bosom the innumerable currents of scientific research. When Humboldt's 'Kosmos' first appeared, the work itself was scarcely more wonderful than the instantaneous and promiscuous character of the notice it received. That pampered and yet put-upon nondescript, "the general reader," was unable to account for the obligation under which he suddenly found himself, to recognise amongst popular publications a book that bristled all over with scientific terminology, and discoursed of barometers without the slightest reference to umbrellas. M. de Humboldt, however, was not only the author of 'Kosmos,' 'Ansichten der Natur,' and other scientific treatises. He was also a *koeniglich preussischer Kammerherr*. And the days were already gone by when a lady of princely rank could say to the French ambassador at the Congress of Verona, "*Vous n'êtes pas, je suppose, Monsieur le Vicomte, parent d'un certain Monsieur de Chateaubriand qui écrit ?*"

Humboldt himself describes his great work as an endeavour "to show that a certain degree of scientific completeness in the treatment of individual facts is not wholly incompatible with a picturesque animation of style." This endeavour, almost unexampled in the scientific literature of Germany, was certainly successful. The literary quality of

'Kosmos' is not inferior to its scientific value. The style of the book, whilst adequately sustaining the serious dignity of science, is clear, graceful, and abounding in flights of the highest poetic fancy. But whatever may have been the cause of its great and immediate popularity, there can be no doubt that this wonderful work was far from finding in the majority of its numerous readers a state of mind at all prepared to appreciate the lofty scientific point of view from which it is written. The splendid universality of its author's intellectual acquirement, and his rare power of generalisation, enabled him to concentrate under a single *coup d'œil*, as accurate as it is comprehensive, the results achieved in each department of the science of his time. For the world at large, this is Alexander von Humboldt's great merit. The 'Kosmos' authoritatively put an end to that separatist tendency of scientific researches which Auguste Comte has so vehemently denounced. It indicated, in a generally appreciable manner, the distant goal they have in common. It did this, moreover, without falling into the opposite, and perhaps more dangerous, vice of hasty systematisation which has exposed Comte himself to the just impatience of scientific specialists; and it created in the mind even of unscientific persons a notion of the important correlation of all natural phenomena. It would probably not be difficult to show how much of the ground consecrated from time immemorial to the cultivation of human knowledge that one book has sufficed to redeem from the infructuous dominion of what is

called philosophy, and how abundant are the harvests yielded by the rescued soil ever since it passed under the plough of positive science. But all that we are here concerned with is the mark made upon the great index of general literature by the continually-increasing influence of natural science in the common culture of the age.

It is solely from this point of view that we have been reminded of Humboldt's 'Kosmos' by the perusal of Quinet's 'Creation.' Between the two books there is nothing in common, except the promiscuous character of the public to which they appeal. The work before us represents the fruit of its author's recent political exile. His literary career has hitherto been exclusively devoted to the examination of fossilised literatures, historical deposits, and social cataclysms. Naturalists have unconsciously occasioned considerable modifications in the old methods of historical inquiry; but M. Quinet's new book is, so far as we know, the first attempt seriously made by any eminent historian to apply historical methods to natural science. Here he deals with a subject on which he is less qualified to address us. The chief interest of this book, however, is to be found in its suggestive illustration, not only of its author's individual genius, but also indirectly of the genius of his nation.

The French have, on all occasions, been the first to break down that partition-wall which, in every country more or less, but especially in Germany, a sort of intellectual *particularism* seeks to maintain between the erudite oligarchy who think and write, and the plebeian public who only read and talk. And here we come upon a singular con-

tradiction between the social and intellectual life of the two communities to which we are most indebted for social and intellectual activity. Ludwig Börne has likened the German mind to a high alpine country. "Those sterile heights," he says, "have fertilised the world at their feet. Here spring the great sources, hence flow the great streams of history, the noble nations, the noble thoughts! To the Germans genius, to the French talent. To the first productive, to the last industrial, force. From the soil of Germany first started those great ideas which have been utilised and set going by other nations more adroit, more enterprising, or more fortunate. Germany is the head-spring of all the revolutions of Europe; the mother of those discoveries which have changed the face of the world. Gunpowder, the printing-press, the Reformation, have sprung from her womb. Daughters ungrateful and accursed, who have espoused princes, and despised and harassed their plebeian mother!"*

Writing from the hotbed of French *chauvinism*, swagger, and barbarous intellectual self-conceit of all kinds, Börne was fully entitled to put forward thus strongly on behalf of his own nation a claim to the gratitude of those who in other nations appreciate, and perhaps overestimate, the merits of the French intellect, whilst inadequately acknowledging the importance of all that has been achieved by Germany for the moral and intellectual emancipation of the human race. His comparison is fair so far as it goes. But all comparisons, if not odious, are at least incomplete. We may appreciate the felicity of Mr Matthew Arnold's description of France as "famed in

* Criticism on Heine's "De l'Allemagne" in the 'Reformateur' of May 30, 1835. See *Gesammelte Schriften*, vol. vii. p. 258.

all great arts, in none supreme,"* without contesting either the originality or the value of French literature. The genius which inspired such writers as Montaigne, Molière, and Voltaire, is not only autochthonous, but is also exceedingly precious to the world at large. Nor can it be denied that during the greater part of the eighteenth and the commencement of the nineteenth century the mind of Germany was greatly under the influence of French ideas, French art, and French literature. Until the great reaction started by Lessing in favour of the natural drama, the national stage of Germany was exclusively ruled by Racine, Corneille, and Voltaire. Moreover, this reaction was due to a foreign influence—the influence of Shakespeare. Germany, however, is the undoubted begetter of one of the sublimest and most beneficent ideas of modern times:—an idea which can only be expressed without circumlocution by a German word,—the *Humanitätsidee*.† In other words, the conception of humanity as a great moral and intellectual whole, and the contemplation of individual culture as a complete *ensemble* in harmony with such a conception. It is only by the active recognition of this idea that a man can place himself in helpful sympathy with all his fellow-creatures, and intelligent unison with the universe he inhabits. It has been eloquently described by William Humboldt, who was himself one of the noblest disciples of that great doctrine of general culture which it has inspired throughout Germany. "If," he says, "we would indicate an idea

which throughout the whole course of history has ever more and more widely extended its empire—or which more than any other testifies to the much-contested, and still more decidedly misunderstood, perfectibility of the human race—it is that of establishing our common humanity; of striving to remove the barriers which prejudice and limited views of every kind have erected amongst men, and to treat all mankind, without reference to religion, nation, or colour, as one fraternity, one great community, fitted for the attainment of one object—the unrestrained development of the psychical powers. This is the ultimate and highest aim of society, identical with the direction imparted by nature in the mind of man towards the indefinite extension of his existence. He regards the earth in all its limits, and the heavens so far as his eye can scan their bright and starry depths, as inwardly his own; given to him as the objects of his contemplation, and as a field for the development of his energies. Even the child longs to pass the hills or the sea which enclose his narrow home; yet, when his eager steps have borne him beyond those limits, he pines like the plant for his native soil: and it is by this touching and beautiful attribute of man—this longing for that which is unknown, and this fond remembrance of that which is lost—that he is spared from an exclusive attachment to the present. Thus, deeply rooted in the innermost nature of man, and even enjoined upon him by his highest tendencies, the recognition of the bond

* Sonnet to a Republican Friend, 1848.

† This idea, however, was finely anticipated by Vico, from whom we cannot forbear to cite the following passage: "Quis igitur non, quod olim Mutius, *Civis romanus sum*, sed, quod multo est grandius, magnificentiusque, *Mundi civis sum*, potest dicere, nisi solus sapiens, qui de rebus superis inferisque, divinis humanis, universis vera cogitare, et disserere sciat!"

of humanity becomes one of the noblest leading principles in the history of mankind."*

The intellect of France has for centuries been concentrated in one of the most brilliant and cosmopolitan capitals of Europe. But, in strange contrast with the largeness of their intellectual sympathies, all the greatest thinkers of Germany have been citizens of small states; and their individual experience of life has been bounded by the most monotonous provincialism. Yet, thanks to the magnitude of an idea so thoroughly assimilated as to universalise the whole moral and intellectual being of its possessors, each of these small townsmen has been a citizen of the world, "*hospes nullâ in re*." Thus, in Saxony and Silesia, at Hamburg and Brunswick, everywhere cooped close within the narrowest social range, we see Lessing continually disengaging the largest moral and æsthetic generalisations from finely imaginative study of the group of the *Laocœon*, the plays of Shakespeare, and the writings of Aristotle. Similarly, we find Herder, personally pent, as he was all his life, in the dismal penfold of Saxon Protestantism, evoking the Voices of the Peoples (*Stimmen der Völker*), entering into the inmost life, and speaking (as they themselves had spoken it in ages past) the language of the Cid, of the Hebrews, of the Highland clans of Scotland. Kant, too, at Königsberg, which he never quitted in the whole course of his life, participating with the keenest sympathy in the fate of Lisbon, and describing the horrors of the great earthquake as vividly as if he himself had undergone them. Nor, finally, can we ever forget that the man whose mind embraced the

whole circle of human sympathies and faculties was a Geheimerath at the tiny Court of Weimar. It is undoubtedly in Germany that we find the highest thinking accompanied by the plainest living. There is the mental soil most fitted for cultivation, and best cultivated; there the intelligence in which ideas most quickly germinate, and which is thickest sown with them. But the services of the French begin where those of the Germans stop short; for of all nations on the face of the earth, the French have the strongest disposition to utilise, and the most astonishing talent for distributing, the common intellectual property of mankind *pro bono publico*. They have ever been the first to mount the tribune on behalf of human interests, and speak with popular eloquence to the popular heart. On the other hand, the German intellect unfortunately affects in its highest literary manifestations the austere and exclusive character of an aristocracy of *savants*. When we compare David Strauss with Ernest Rénan, Behr's lunar charts with Arago's popular lectures on astronomy, and German liberal theories with French revolutionary experiments in politics, we are irresistibly reminded that Mephistopheles (who, be it remembered, was a German devil) had the modesty to own—

"Der Teufel hat sie's zwar gelehrt,
Alein, der Teufel kan's nicht machen."†

Here, again, as regards the work before us, it is only a Frenchman who, with the impatience characteristic of his nation, would think of building a house—nay, actually build it—before all the stones for it are out of the quarry. Nothing

* Wilhelm von Humboldt. *Über die Kawi-Sprache*, vol. iii. § 426.

† "'Tis true enough, the devil taught it,
But still the devil cannot do it."

stops him; build he must. If a stone be wanting anywhere, he puts a beam in the place of it; and, in one way or other, he contrives to get the roof over his head with astonishing rapidity. Whilst Darwin and Agassiz are still discussing the ground-plan, Quinet is already *dans ses meubles*.

It was only about ten years ago, he tells us, that he first took in hand, for serious study, Oswald Heer's 'Urwelt der Schweiz,' and some other geological and palæontological works. It was then, also, for the first time in his life, that he found himself in presence of the earth's great geological monuments. They made on him a profound impression. "J'avoue," he says "que le premier séjour dans les hautes alpes me jeta dans une sorte de stupeur." He had never before even suspected any differences distinguishing the silurian formation from the Grauwacke group, or the eocene formation of the tertiary group.

Yet in this book he lays down for us the outlines of an entirely new history of the human race, parallel with the geological outlines of the history of the earth itself. "J'entreprends," he says, "de faire entrer la révolution contemporaine de l'histoire naturelle dans le domaine général de l'esprit humain; c'est à dire d'établir les rapports de la conception nouvelle de la nature avec l'histoire, les arts, les langues, les lettres, l'économie sociale, et la philosophie. J'avoue que je me propose ainsi un grand but."

No one will contest this assertion; and in presence of so great an undertaking, we are certainly not disposed to raise captious or pedantic objections to the qualifications for it possessed by the illustrious author of 'Ahasverus,' 'Prométhée,' and 'L'Enchanteur Merlin'—in all of which works the aim

proposed to himself by M. Quinet has also been grandiose. But, in point of fact, M. Quinet's special aim in the present work is common to the whole intellectual tendency of his age; and the work itself is simply one amongst innumerable other contributions, of daily occurrence, to the development of that intellectual tendency, which it illustrates with the habitual brilliancy of its author's acknowledged genius. As we esteem it the legitimate, and indeed the obligatory, function of literature to deal with all those intellectual tendencies which accompany or change the general character of society, we are in no wise disposed to object to the exercise of that function by M. Quinet in reference to the purely intellectual results of scientific research. Our objection is to the tendency which we detect in M. Quinet's own enthusiasm to exceed the limits of what we regard as the legitimate province of the literary mind. Adopting scientific fact as his raw material, the poet (and M. Quinet need not resent that title which justly and nobly distinguishes him from the generality of prose writers) is entitled to fashion it into whatever form his imagination may dictate. But the production of the raw material cannot be intrusted to the poet. It belongs exclusively to the physical specialist. The poetic mind must not be allowed to thrust itself into the domain of special science, and there declaim (no matter how eloquently or ingeniously) theories which may or may not be true; but which are certainly not conceived in the scientific spirit, or supported by scientific modes of proof.

M. Quinet's 'Creation,' so far as regards some palæontological theories which it broaches, is not free from faults of this kind.

The author starts with a good

many postulates, and often begins where even the most speculative inquirers have ended. But, though often fanciful, he is never illogical; and we are compelled to admire the literary skill with which he arranges his recently and rapidly acquired materials—presenting them to us in a perfectly congruous *ensemble*, such as he himself conceives it should be. Every page of the book is eminently *spirituel*.

M. Quinet's general theory is that every animal type either disappears altogether with the disappearance of the geological period to which it belongs, or else continues to exist *without any essential modification*, so long as it finds in subsequent periods a *natural or artificial milieu* sufficiently similar to that in which it first appeared.

Thus, the inability of the red ants to obtain or prepare their own food he attributes to the completion of their organisation at a period anterior to the floral revolution of the tertiary world. But as these insects have all their wants supplied by their black descendants, they continue to live on in a world not theirs—like some old gentlemen who would die of insult and mortification if turned loose to shift for themselves amongst the streets of London, but in whom we admire the stately graces of a day gone by when we see them on their ancestral acres surrounded by dutiful and affectionate grandchildren.

It is not only fossils (says our author) that bear witness to the forms of extinct or primeval species; every plant, every animal, if traced back to its parent type, fixes a distinct date in that long series of events which constitute the history of the earth. If the desert were to disappear, evidence of its existence would still remain in the camel. Any common snail will suffice to represent to a trained imagination

the gasteropod of the primeval world; any crab-like animal, to recall the trilobite of the palæozoic epoch; any nautilus, the ammonite of the secondary period. In the tortoise we behold the animated world venturing timidly above the surface of the triassic seas. The earth of the lias period, which for a moment peeped above them, only to plunge its back again beneath the waters—an earth, itself amphibious—has bequeathed to us the crocodile. But if the liassic world could only produce these little and low islets, why such enormous reptiles to inhabit such scanty spaces? The reptiles did not inhabit them. They only came up, occasionally, to breathe on the low coasts of those small isles. It was in the depth of the waters that they lived. There was their great fish-pond—

“Domum genetricis, et humida regna.”

The earth crawled out of the water, and the reptile crawled over the earth. Where this state of things still exists, among the oozy banks and mud-deposits of the Nile, there still dwells, undisturbed by the countless revolutions which have modernised the rest of the world without molesting “his ancient, solitary reign,” he whom no Horace has yet hailed as *attavis edite regibus* (for he is certainly not a Mæcenas), yet whose lineage is older than the oldest Alban kings—the secular Sauria.

So, too, the *Blatta Orientalis*—a citizen of the Jurassic world, who once lived luxuriously among the tepid lias isles on the rich meal of their equisita and calamites, although now, indeed, reduced to beggary or theft—still contrives to find analogous nutriment in the flour he filches from the baker's sack; whilst the tropic clime of his long-lost native land is artificially

reproduced for him by the baker's oven.

From the presence of the tertiary world the sea recedes. *Mare videt et fugit*. Life has now a soul above crawling and creeping. From the Ural to the Indies there is space to run, to leap, to climb. The archæopteryx (the only one of his family who has saved his bones, at Munich) is certainly not yet a swallow; but in his days it was not yet the fashion to make the grand tour of Europe. In the dawn of that long succession of ever increasingly-developed organisms which began with the tertiary era—

"Life rising still on life, with higher tone"—

the bird of the air was not

"Et maria, et terræ, numeroque carentis
arenæ
Mensor."

Wandering over the face of the earth, wherever he spied no earth beneath him he dared not venture further. How then does it happen that nowadays the swallow travels yearly to and fro between the north of Europe and the land of the Nile? Every 8th of September, so irresistible is her longing to be off, that this incomparable mother will even abandon those of her young who are not fit for so long a journey, and fly away with the others. Why? She herself assuredly knows not why. But she *does* it. And man, who cannot do it, thinks he knows why it is done. It is an old, old habit of journeying over an old, old continent which has never found a place in any map. In the tertiary period an isthmus united the coasts of France and Italy with those of Africa. Over this vast tract of continental earth went the old original swallow-road, well furnished with convenient resting-places. But the bridge broke down. Not all at once. For a long while, perhaps,

the piles of it may have here and there resisted the sapping of the sea-waves. Pile by pile, however, these also sank at last; and nothing survived but—the force of habit.

Assuredly, if the swallows know only half as much about men as men profess to know about swallows, we should do well to listen oftener and more attentively to the annual twitterings of these interesting little folks. The swallow that is born in a Yorkshire village has never seen Africa. But she knows it, and how to find her way thither. So the bee knows how to knead geometrical figures in wax without going to school—just as men go to school without learning geometry. We call this instinct; and by instinct we mean something vastly inferior to reason. Perhaps the other animals discuss the human intelligence in the same style.

The fable of the oak and the reed would seem to be not only as old as the hills, but a great deal older. It was acted on a world-wide stage, long before there were either reeds or oaks to act it. Of thirty-nine species of mammals belonging to the miocene period, twenty-nine have perished. But the insect tribes of that period still exist, and, according to M. Quinet, either wholly unchanged or with only slight modifications. The much-calumniated earwig, who existed long before ears—the ladybird, who has never changed the fashion of her scarlet gown, brodered with its fifteen black bugles—the damsel-flies, who still gad about in the gauze and tinsel dresses worn by their great-great-grandmothers at many a lively water-party, about the languid pools of the hot liassic isles: the spiders, too, and termites—all the workers in wood—all they who made sawdust before there were saws—the world's first carpenters, masons, and architects.

"Genus immortale manet, multasque per
 annos
 Stat fortuna domûs, et avi numerantur
 avorum."

The insect, like the gipsy tribes, moreover, have their saga, their traditions, and legends — legends which shrink, no doubt, from the presence of history; but perhaps that is because history knows not how to treat them. If so, we need not grudge them the asylum which they find in poetry, nor refuse to believe with M. Quinet (who is both an historian and a poet) that "the busy murmur" which still "glows through the peopled air," amongst the fields, where any summer noon may be profitably passed over the pages of his pleasant volumes, is the oldest song ever sung upon earth, and that the world's earliest minstrel is the cricket. Now, he is silent all day long. But night restores to him the obscurity of his ancient home in the primeval forest. And then he sings, and his song is of "the days which are no more."

Is not Fragility the earthly form of Immortality? The storm-struck oak falls in the wind without snapping the light web which yesterday a spider suspended in the trunk, where a hundred years had hollowed out her home. Two miles from shore, Mr Darwin saw floating over the ship a fine white filament. He caught it on the end of his stick. It was a spider's web, with a spider in it. Doubtless the halcyon had hovered round that airy pinnace, and passed on, perhaps, to snap at some fish who had a whole ocean to cover and keep him safe. Men in Venice, four hundred years ago, made drinking-glasses as thin as bubbles, and as fragile. The workmen who had betrayed the secret of their manufacture fell smitten by an unseen hand in Nuremberg or Holland. These glasses still exist. They have gone through the Thirty

Years' War. Illo and Isolani have drunk out of them midnight toasts to treason. They have decked the board for many a brawling orgie, where skulls were cracked in sport. The glasses are unbroken. They have traversed the Alps, the sea, and have travelled long journeys over unpaved roads in the first rude coaches made for the princes of Tour and Taxis. Yet they are intact. The commerce of Venice has decayed, her glory is gone, her nobles are ruined, her marbles are rotting. These glasses, the frailest creatures of her perished art, remain untouched by time. The Angel of Destruction delights only in the conquest of difficulties. The dread invisible hand which can cripple the limbs of Hercules, blast the beauty of Cleopatra, and blind the eyes of Homer, will not clench its inexorable fingers on the glassy bubble that is brittle to an infant's touch. The ephemeral is the ancient of days.

But, to return to M. Quinet. "Man," "The Propylæa of History," and the "Palæontology of Languages," are the subjects of the seventh, eighth, and ninth books of his second volume. "Principes d'une Science Nouvelle" and "Le Parallélisme des Règnes de la Nature et de l'Humanité" occupy the tenth and eleventh books. The twelfth, and last, is devoted to a consideration of the means of a "conciliation of the moral and physical orders." The subjects of these three last books have inspired M. Quinet with his most eloquent pages.

Eloquent! Yes, that is the final word. M. Quinet's eloquence carries him away. Some people, who, perhaps, are too prosaic, will probably say that he is too poetical. That is not quite true. But modern French writers have a most provoking tendency to declamation. The orator who overheats himself is sûr to

chill his audience. Unfortunately, however, men who speak with honest enthusiasm are apt to overlook this danger; and it is impossible to doubt the honesty of M. Quinet's enthusiasm. An earnest desire to understand, even at the risk of misunderstanding, must not be confounded with reckless indifference to error. In an enterprise so rapidly conceived and executed as this seven-league-booted journey through creation, it is impossible but that M. Quinet must have overleapt many a chasm which he will have to retrace, and thrown across many a torrent hasty and temporary bridges which, on subsequent inspection, he will find to be unsafe. But we recognise in his work a genuine ardour of inquiry which will doubtless prevent him from applying to his own creation the words of the Abbé Vertot, who, when offered certain new documents about the siege of Valetta after he had completed his history of the 'Knights of Malta,' replied, "*Mon siège est fait.*"

There is a very beautiful passage in Kant's introduction to his celebrated treatise, of which we have constantly been reminded by the perusal of this work:—

"The light dove," he says, "when, in the freedom of her flight, she cleaves the air of which she feels the resisting power, might possibly imagine that she would fly better in a vacuum. Thus Plato, quitting the sphere of sensation, which confines the intelligence within narrow limits, attempted to soar upon the wings of ideas into the empty spaces of pure intellect. He perceived not that, in spite of all his efforts, he made no way, because he had no *point d'appui*. This is the common fate of the human

understanding when it speculates. It begins by erecting its edifice in all haste, and it is not till afterwards that it thinks of ascertaining whether the foundations are sound."*

No one will dispute the severely scientific patience and industry of Professor Hæckel, of whose great work † Mr Darwin declares that had the publication of it preceded the composition of his own work on the 'Descent of Man,' this latter work "would probably never have been completed."‡ But Hæckel, after acknowledging that the subordinate art of morphography can never attain to the dignity of the sublime science of morphology until the laws of structural development shall have been recognised in the chaos of the structures themselves, adds, by way of apology for the temerity of his own enterprise:—

"It may be objected to us that the moment is not yet come, that our empirical basis is not yet sufficiently large, that our perception of nature is still immature, and our knowledge of organic forms still too imperfect. But the lofty and distant goal of morphological science will never be attained, if we cease for a moment to fix our eyes upon it. If we put off the construction of the edifice, and postpone all inquiry into the principles of morphology until our knowledge of existing forms be complete, we shall never make any progress. The process of completing and perfecting our edifice will be eternal, but that ought not to prevent us from establishing ourselves in it, with a full enjoyment of legal order, even though our knowledge of the laws in question may be confessedly imperfect."§

Between the work of a great scientific discoverer such as Hæckel, and that of an author who is essen-

* Immanuel Kant. Kritik der reinen Vernunft, Introd. iii. We have somewhat abridged the original text.

† Natürliche Schöpfungsgeschichte.

‡ Descent of Man, Introduction.

§ Generelle Morphologie, i. 7.

tially a man, not of science, but of letters, there can of course be no comparison. But if men of science are often compelled to generalise from confessedly imperfect data, men of letters may be fairly allowed a more imaginative treatment of scientific facts, in regard to which their function is entirely synthetic.

We must not, however, leave unnoticed one of the most suggestive portions of this book, in which its author's historical training appears to us felicitously applied. We are not convinced of the accuracy of some observations which occur in his description of the Butterfly as "the epitome of all animated nature;" but we are not at all disposed to question the general accuracy of the method whereby, in this and other cases, he refers the explanation of certain otherwise inexplicable animal instincts to habitudes contracted by the animal in circumstances no longer existing, and possibly at some remote period of time. Why, for instance, the present unreasonable antipathy between dog and cat? Because, says M. Quinet, the original dog and cat (*felis spelæa* and *amphicyon*) used to devour each other. This method is susceptible of very general application. It is the past which interprets to us the present; and the present, intelligently studied, always helps us to divine the past. If statesmen could be induced to bear this in mind, they would cease to believe themselves capable of transforming the character of a people by institutions or constitutions devised and adopted without the slightest regard to historical continuity. Languages have

also their geological ages. Amidst modern formations we find words which are as incongruous as camels, ostriches, and crocodiles, in the existing animal world. They are the living representatives of lost ages. Nor between the fossilised, and the living languages which have grown out of them, and in which we find their fragments embedded, is there any greater trace of intermediate formations, or connecting links, than is discoverable between the animal types of the primary, secondary, and tertiary periods. Whenever a language passes into the purely literary state, and becomes exclusively a book language, the petrification of it begins; because it is then cut off from its natural sources of nutriment, the popular dialects.* Hindustani, for instance, may perhaps be in the same relation to Sanscrit, modern Greek to ancient Greek, and Italian to Latin, as the modern horse to the tertiary horse, the elephant to the mastodon, or the modern oak to the miocene oak. M. Quinet combats (with great plausibility, as it seems to us) the attempt of M. Littré to derive the Italian language from *corrupted*, instead of from *primitive*, Latin. He notices, amongst other characteristic traits of primitive Latin, the suppression (now characteristic of the Italian, Sicilian, Spanish, Portuguese, and Moldo-Wallachian languages) of the final consonant in words ending in *s*—as, for instance, *aliqui* for *aliquis*, *dominu* for *dominus*, *caballu* for *caballus*, &c.; whereas the later Latin termination in *us* continued in the written language throughout the middle ages, and occurs in Gregory of Tours, and the barbarous legal

* An accomplished Italian friend of the present writer was about to abandon in despair the completion of a work he had long meditated upon chemistry because he could not make up his mind to adopt foreign terms for objects undiscovered before the literature of his country had become classical. From this dilemma he was relieved by noticing that the workmen in his laboratory had given to all these objects names which, on examination, proved to be grammatical developments of pure Tuscan roots.

Latin of the feudal charters—quite as invariably as in Cicero or Quintilian. To the numerous similar examples cited by M. Quinet, we will venture to add one, which occurs to us while we are writing. The modern Greek word in common use for water is not ὕδωρ but νερόν. Thus in the living dialect reappears the archaic *ναρός, νᾶρός, νηρός* (flowing) which was buried before the days of Homer in its derivatives *Νηρός, Νηρή, Νηρήνς, Νηρήϊς, &c.*

But let us turn from philology to an older and less disputable science. How did Leverrier discover the planet Neptune? He prescribed to that star the precise point in space where, at a given moment, it was bound to present itself for inspection. And the star obeyed the orders of the man. Miles away from Leverrier, another astronomer directed his telescope to that point of the immeasurable midnight heavens, and cried from Berlin to Paris, "Present!" How was this done? Perturbations had been noticed in the course followed by other celestial bodies, the nearest neighbours of the yet unknown colossus. What could be the cause of this effect? No adequate cause was apparent in any of the known circumstances of the known planets. If a planet deviates, it can only be because of the attraction or repulsion of some other body. What is that other body? We know it not. But we can certainly affirm that it exists, because we certainly perceive that it acts. *Ago ergo sum* is the formula of the stars.

And if any one be disposed to doubt the general applicability of the method we have been discussing, even to more practical departments of inquiry, let him remember the advice given to his detectives by a celebrated investigator of crime, "Cherchez la femme!"

M. Quinet is not a man to shrink from confronting any problem.

Like Horatio, "he'll cross it, though it blast him." This last enterprise of his, however, raises a question of general interest on which we have a word to say before we have done with the subject of it. We need not here reiterate our emphatic disapproval of all assumption by the poet of the purely scientific character and authority which exclusively belong to the physical specialist. But neither are we prepared to admit that the poets and philosophers of this specially scientific age have no account to make with the naturalists and physicists. On the contrary, nothing appears to us more urgently needed than the deliberate subordination of the physical specialist and all his work to the moral, æsthetic, and social aspects of life. In a word, we think it greatly to be desired that every man who is *not* a physical specialist should actively exert his intelligence to synthesise the new discoveries, hypotheses, theories, and intellectual influences with which we are surrounded, by the prolific activity of physical science; and, as much as may be, to spiritualise our increasing knowledge of the material universe. Moreover, apart from this higher aim which may be legitimately and usefully pursued by the representatives of literature, we would not willingly surrender the privilege of poetry, imagination, and *esprit* to take possession when they please of all subjects furnished to thought by scientific fact. Grant to the miner the merit of digging from the earth, and to the manufacturer the merit of distributing for convenient usage, those precious substances which nature has only partially concealed. in order to stimulate the curiosity and exercise the energies of man. But let us not grant to either the right of protest or refusal, if some artist passing by should say to them: "Of the metal with which

you make axes, ploughs, and hammers, give me enough to make a statue. My statue will be of no practical use. But those who behold it will perhaps pause to admire in it the beauty of the divinity which it will represent. And if, as they go their ways, they should drop a word of approbation for the artist who conceived and modelled it, they will probably add, 'And yet this also was made of iron!'

Will the iron have been degraded by such employment? Will it be less serviceable for common use because it has once been promoted to that place in art which was previously occupied by ivory and marble? Is the anatomist deprived of his scalpel, or the pioneer of his hatchet, because the metal of which these instruments are made serves also as material for an image of the son of Danaë? The image is false. It represents as fact what is only pure imagination. Granted. But is the material, for that reason, wasted? Has the imagination been misapplied? Is it nothing to have imagined the deliverance of Andromeda?

There is another side to this question. Burke tells us that "it is our ignorance of natural things which causes all our admiration, and chiefly excites our passions." The very questionable sense of this saying has been absurdly exaggerated by a great many persons who seem to be so afraid of knowing too much about "natural things" that they resolutely refuse to know anything at all about them. These good people, who regard the scientific study of nature as destructive of the poetry of nature, assume without trial that the tendency of it must be to paralyse the imagination of the scientific student, to chill his emotional humanity, and to desiccate the flow of spiritual life within him. They appear to be

convinced that there was greater comfort to the heart and soul of man in the old belief that the sun goes round the earth, than can possibly be extracted from the present lamentable certainty that the earth goes round the sun. All evidence, therefore, of the stimulating and elevating influence of natural science upon the imaginative and spiritual faculties of such a mind as Edgar Quinet's must be welcomed, if for no other reason, at least for the salutary refutation which it presents to this mischievous notion. And therefore, although the final effect of M. Quinet's bold and brilliant sally into the thorny field of palæontological research is in some respects injured by his exuberant enthusiasm, we think that this æsthetic defect is not without a moral compensation.

Thus far we have noticed the work before us chiefly in its relation to literature. As regards its less important and more disputable relation to science, we take it to be one of the incidental results of a powerful reaction in the progress of the natural sciences. This reaction, if not inaugurated, was enormously promoted in 1859 by the publication of Charles Darwin's hypotheses of natural selection and the struggle for life. Natural philosophy, thrown back in 1830 by the victory which George Cuvier in the *séance* of the Academy of the 22d of February won over Etienne Geoffroi St Hilaire, has now re-entered the field of inquiry from which it has been for nearly thirty years an exile. Scientific thinkers, intoxicated with the rapture of reconquest, are eagerly taking possession of the treasures meanwhile stowed away by empiricists in the secret receptacles of museums.

During all these thirty years the names of Goethe and Lamarck, which were put upon the index, have been

buried in the oblivion from which they are now withdrawn in company with those of Oken and Geoffroi St Hilaira. The strength of the reaction is in proportion to the length of the repression, and it is sure to overshoot the mark. But the oscillation of the scales must invariably precede the equilibrium of the balance.

In his last work, which almost bears the date of his last sigh (1832), Goethe's prodigious prevision seems to have anticipated this return of an intellectual tendency which he lived only to see repudiated. When M. Falk called upon him to talk about the July Revolution (the news of which had just reached Weimar), he was astonished by the enthusiasm with which Goethe discussed that event, until he discovered that what Goethe was speaking of was not the revolution which had just broken out on the barricades of the Boulevards, but the revolution which was at stake in the battle then raging between the Chairs of the Academy.

After Linnæus, we have Lamarck; after Lamarck, Cuvier; and now, after Cuvier, Darwin.

"Nocte pluit totâ redeunt spectacula mane."

The movement of the human mind is ever from one extreme to the other. *E pur se muove.*

But the special question presented to us by M. Quinet's 'Creation' is whether history will ever be written on the system which this book is intended to inaugurate. What can we say in reply to such a question?

"Montaigne eut dit 'Que sais-je?' et Rabelais 'Peut-être.'"

This only will we venture to affirm—the historian who questions and examines natural phenomena with the reverent attention to which all future historians are encouraged by M. Quinet, can hardly fail to write history a great deal better than he who questions and examines nothing but books and parchments.

AN EDUCATIONAL EXPERIMENT IN YORKSHIRE.

AMONG the social problems that are pressing for solution at the present time in England, the following have been acknowledged by statesmen of both political parties to be especially interesting and important :—

1. How to found in a manufacturing town a system of secondary education for boys and young men, adapted to the special needs of such a locality.
2. How to provide that the intelligent and careful members of the working classes shall be able to obtain for their sons a share in this higher education.
3. How to reform an old and decayed school endowment, so as to popularise, without wasting its resources, and to breathe into it a new spirit of life.
4. How to extend to girls the benefits of an educational endowment.

An attempt has recently been made, in the rising manufacturing town of Keighley, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, to solve these problems ; and the object of this paper is to give a brief account of the mode in which that attempt has been made.

The town of Keighley stands on the river Aire, in the beautiful district of Craven, about nine miles to the north-west of Bradford. Twenty years ago, in 1851, its population was little over 13,000. It was then about as big a town as its neighbour Bradford was at the beginning of the present century. But the last twenty years have wrought a great change in Keighley, and its population is now nearly 26,000. It seems but yesterday that our first International Exhibition was opened, and that Louis Napoleon became Emperor of the

French. Yet, whereas at that time Keighley was smaller than Bury St Edmunds, Henley, and Weymouth now are, it is now nearly equal in population to such towns as Oxford, Carlisle, Reading, and Hastings, and much greater than many ancient and considerable county towns, such as Lancaster, Gloucester, Shrewsbury, Canterbury, and Salisbury.

Of the two founders of the system of Mechanics' Institutes in England, Lord Brougham and Dr Birkbeck, the latter was a native of the Craven district ; and the Keighley Mechanics' Institute was one of the first established in England. Its work was to supply its subscribers with a newsroom and a lending library, and with instruction in evening classes ; and this humble work it had creditably performed for upwards of thirty years. Its library contained four thousand volumes. Its evening classes were attended by more than 200 pupils of both sexes. In short, it was so far felt to be a useful institution, that its managers, about the year 1867, determined to endeavour to raise subscriptions for a new building. In this new building they proposed so to enlarge and improve the accommodation afforded to their subscribers as to render the Institute a model Working Man's Club. They also hoped to extend the educational work of the Institute so as to make some provision for technical and scientific instruction. They looked round on the trades and industrial employments of their district ; and saw that, for the successful conducting of almost all of them, technical and scientific skill, and artistic knowledge, are required.

They were well aware that in the

matter of practical training, English workmen are surpassed by none in the world. And they had good reason, as Yorkshire manufacturers, to know that Yorkshire workmen are inferior to none in England. But still they believed that the want of the means of technical instruction must place even these gifted workmen and their employers at a disadvantage in the struggle with foreign producers. And they determined that, whatever other branches of education they might eventually be able to undertake, their new Institute should, at any rate, afford artistic, scientific, and technical instruction.

While they were hesitating as to the precise mode in which it would be best for them to endeavour to carry out this determination, a local society, the Yorkshire Board of Education, came to their aid, and gave to their proposals a definite shape and a support which were very valuable. This Board is a voluntary association of Yorkshire noblemen, country gentlemen, and manufacturers, whose programme may be briefly described by saying that they do any educational work in the county which is not being performed by any other body, and withdraw from any work that they are doing whenever another body will take it up. Their work is the work of educational initiative—a most valuable work in a busy country, and one which a local body is peculiarly well fitted to perform. In the autumn of 1868 the secretary of this Board conferred with the managers of the Keighley Mechanics' Institute, and suggested that the best mode of affording the secondary education which they desired to establish in their new Institute, would be to open in it a trade school or school of technical instruction, somewhat on the model of La Martinière at Lyons, or of the Turgot Municipal School at Paris. The

Board heartily supported their secretary in this suggestion, and even went so far as to offer, in case a local guarantee were not forthcoming, to guarantee such a trade school financially for three years. This pecuniary assistance, however, was not ultimately required. The managers adopted the suggestion of the Board, and set to work in earnest at their buildings, designing them so as to embrace the threefold object of a club, a school of science and art, and a trade school. That, with no initiative from the Government of the country, with no example of a successful effort of a like kind in Leeds, in Bradford, in Sheffield, or in any of their great manufacturing neighbours, to support and cheer them, these busy, practical, money-making men, in a country town of less than 26,000 inhabitants, should have lavished their time and money in providing secondary education for their fellow-citizens, should have seen so clearly what was the programme of education required, and should have been willing to stake their reputation on the issue of such a novel experiment, is a fine example of what Mr Forster, in a recent speech at Bradford, described as "that old force which has done great good in past times, and which will do great good in future—that is, the desire we have in England to help one another."

The new buildings in which this experiment was to be conducted were commenced in 1869, and the work went forward so well, that in the autumn of 1870 they were completed, and were ready to be opened. But, meantime, a new force had come into action, which disturbed all the calculations of the promoters. This force was the Endowed Schools Commission, created by Mr Forster's Endowed Schools Act of 1869. From what has been said in this paper of the anxiety of the men of

Keighley to supply their town with a system of secondary education, the reader may perhaps have supposed that no public provision for such education had ever previously been made in the town. But this was not quite the case. There were, in fact, two ancient endowments for secondary education in Keighley. One of these was the foundation of John Drake, who, in 1713, devised to trustees certain estates "for the maintenance of a sufficient, unmarried, and qualified schoolmaster, for teaching children residing in the town and parish of Keighley, in the English, Latin, and Greek tongues, free, and without any reward or stipend whatever." The other was the foundation of Jonas Tonson, who, in 1716, conveyed certain premises to trustees "for the support and maintenance of an usher, who should teach and instruct such children as should come to learn in the free school of Keighley, in the English and Latin tongues, with the upper master in the said school." The aggregate value of these endowments was, in 1869, about £300 a-year, exclusive of certain school buildings and premises, respecting which more will presently be said. And as the property of these foundations consisted of land and houses in and near Keighley, there was a prospect of a rise in their value by means of judicious sales and re-investments. Thus the town of Keighley had actually possessed, for more than a century and a half, two foundations bequeathed to it for the purpose of developing in its midst a high class of secondary education.

In the years 1866-67, the Schools Inquiry Commissioners investigated the condition of these foundations, and published a full report upon them. The Commissioners found that the two endowments which had originally been intended by

their founders to work together for the maintenance of secondary education, had, in course of time, become disunited. Of Drake's endowment a portion had been temporarily sunk in building a new "free school;" and the remainder was applied for the benefit of a master to teach in that school. But the Commissioners found that, so far from giving the high kind of education which the founder designed, this school was really doing only elementary work, and not doing that work so well as the inspected National and Wesleyan schools of the town. No children of the professional men, or of the better shopkeepers, were learning in the school. No boy was learning Greek, or had learnt it there for years. Latin was professed; but only a very few boys were found to be doing it. "Not one of them was far enough advanced to write out from memory the inflexions of a noun; and only two could construe a simple sentence in a book of elementary exercises." The reading of English was worse in this school than in the ordinary elementary schools. "Very little progress had been made in arithmetic;" the best boys being unable to go beyond proportion. The scholars came to the school very ignorant, and without preparation. The master was single-handed, and was unable to classify his scholars properly. "He frankly said that the National and Wesleyan schools in the town possessed advantages in the shape of pupil-teachers, and of regular organisation and inspection, with which he could not hope to compete." In short, the Commissioners found that Drake's foundation, while pretending to maintain a "free grammar school" in the town of Keighley, was really squandered in providing an unnecessary, an unpopular, and a bad elementary school.

Proceeding to Tonson's benefaction, the Commissioners found that the connection of this foundation for an "usher" with that of Drake for a "master," had "been lost sight of." It was managed by a separate body of trustees, and was employed in paying an old, incompetent, and feeble man to teach some twenty little children in a dilapidated building in the centre of the town, at a payment of 2d. a-week. This building was a part of the old grammar school not sold, or otherwise utilised, when the new school was built; the remainder being converted into a blacksmith's shop. The master was the son of a former head-master on Drake's foundation: the scholars were a few rude little boys from neighbouring cottages. "Nobody," said the Commissioners, "pretends that this school is of the smallest use, except to furnish an annuity to a respectable man whose claims are of long standing." In short, just as Drake's foundation had become a bad little elementary school, so had Tonson's foundation become a bad little infant school. A detailed account of the condition of these foundations, and of the causes which had brought them to that condition, will be found in the 9th and 18th vols. of the Reports of the Schools Inquiry Commission.

It is not wonderful that the men of Keighley had come to regard their grammar school endowments as of no account in the educational resources of their town. They had long despaired of their doing any real educational work; and indeed, in making their calculations for the project of a trade school, they had confidently reckoned on the continued inefficiency of their grammar school. But a surprise was in store for them. In the spring of 1870, as their Trade School buildings were drawing to completion, the Endowed Schools Commissioners notified to

the people of Keighley that they proposed to reorganise their educational endowments, according to a programme of which the following are the main outlines.

The two foundations were to be reunited under a popularly-constituted governing body. The old grammar school buildings were to be sold; and other sales were to be effected so as to improve the value of the united foundations. The masters were to be removed, with such compensation for their vested interests as the Endowed Schools Act might render necessary. Two-thirds of the amalgamated endowments were to be appropriated to maintaining a school for instruction of boys between the ages of eight and seventeen, in English, Latin, Modern Languages, Mathematics, Natural Science, Drawing, and Vocal Music. One-third was to be applied (in accordance with the 12th section of the Endowed Schools Act) in providing, as might be found expedient, for the secondary education of girls. When these proposals of the Commissioners became known to them, the promoters of the Trade School saw that a serious danger threatened their project. They had commenced their Trade School building on the faith of there being no other decent provision for secondary education in the town; and it was clear that the grammar school, when reorganised as the Commissioners proposed, would be a rival, if not a formidable rival, to their new school. They therefore opened negotiations with the Commissioners, in the hope of discovering some plan for the combination of their project with that of the Commissioners, and for the prevention of the rivalry which must otherwise ensue between the two schools. After examining the buildings of the new Mechanics' Institute, and the financial position of the Trade

School scheme, and after several conferences with the promoters and other leading citizens of Keighley, the Commissioners came to the conclusion that the Trade School project was financially sound and educationally good; that it would undoubtedly succeed; that, owing to the excellent provision of lecture and practising rooms for science and art in the new Institute, the boys of the Trade School would have advantages which they could never have in the existing grammar school buildings; and that, on every ground, it would be most desirable to endeavour to combine the reorganisation of Drake's and Tonson's endowments with the Trade School movement. Accordingly, they decided that Drake's grammar school should be reorganised as an endowed school for girls, and that the governing body of that endowed school should be required to apply the proceeds of the amalgamated endowments, partly to the maintenance of such a girls' school, and partly to the subvention, under certain conditions, of the Trade School. The advantages of this plan were obvious. It utilised all available resources. It gave to the promising Trade School project a nucleus of endowment, and therefore an element of firmness and stability; and it furnished an opportunity of making over to girls' education, with the full consent and approval of the people of Keighley, a new and fairly good school building, with an endowment of at least £100 a-year, rising in value. Having formed this decision, the Commissioners published a scheme, which, after providing for the amalgamation of the two foundations, the pensioning of the two masters, the formation of a popular governing body, and other matters already mentioned, requires:—

(1.) That the governors of the endowments shall appropriate the

annual sum of £100 to the establishment and maintenance of a girls' school, which shall be carried on in the school buildings and premises which have been hitherto used for the grammar school at Keighley.

(2.) That, after payment of this £100, the surplus net income of the charity shall be paid by the governors to the managers of the Trade School, on condition (a) that the Trade School provides instruction in certain subjects of a liberal education, as well as in technical subjects. (b) That, in consideration of the sum proposed to be paid to them from the endowment, the managers of the Trade School shall provide a certain number of boys, to be selected by competition from the public elementary schools of the parish of Keighley, with free education in the Trade School. (3.) That, whenever the surplus available for this purpose shall exceed £100, the amount in excess shall be equally divided between the girls' school and the Trade School. (4.) That, if at any time the managers of the Trade School shall cease to comply with the above conditions, the governors of the foundation shall apply the money that would otherwise be applied to the Trade School, for the improvement of the girls' school, or may seek powers from the Charity Commissioners for such other application of it as may seem most advantageous.

This scheme was published by the Commissioners in the summer of 1870, and is now in operation. Very soon after its publication, the new buildings of the Mechanics' Institute were completed, and they were opened by the Duke of Devonshire in the autumn of 1870. An excellent view of the Institute was published in the 'Builder' of July 3, 1869. Externally, it is Gothic in style, and stands in an angle made by the convergence of two large

open streets, which run respectively north to south, and east to west, so that it receives plenty of light from the west and south. It consists of two blocks, or wings, placed at right angles to one another. The principal entrance to the building is up a flight of steps on the west side, which conduct to the first floor; whence a broad staircase leads to the basement, or Trade School section. All the basement rooms are well lighted by means of a large excavated area. There are, in the northern basement, one large and four smaller schoolrooms for the general education of the Trade Scholars; a special building schoolroom; and a retiring-room, with lavatory and other necessary conveniences. In the southern basement are a lecture-theatre for science, 18 feet by 28 feet, and 14 feet high; a laboratory; a large room for models and apparatus; and two other technical classrooms. The rooms of the Working Men's Club consist of a great lecture-hall, 86 feet by 44 feet, and 38 feet high; a newsroom; a reading-room, for periodicals, &c.; a library, 38 feet by 18 feet; a savings-bank; a conversation-room; and the necessary offices for the secretary and committee. Lastly, on the second floor of the southern wing, are a set of excellent rooms for instruction in art, all 20 feet high. There is a room for mechanical and architectural drawing, modelling, casting, &c., 33 feet by 22 feet, well lighted from the south and west; a large room for classes in elementary drawing, 40 feet by 18 feet; an exhibition-room, 46 feet by 22 feet; a room for the art master, and a retiring-room for women students. The total cost of building and furnishing this institution, including estimates, contracts, &c., was nearly £14,000; of which all but about £3000 had been actually obtained or promised when the institution was opened;

and as the nature of the site allows plenty of room for extension, a gymnasium and other improvements may soon be added.

The Trade School has already proved itself a brilliant success. It began work in January 1871, and there are now over 100 scholars in it. The school is divided into three departments, and the course embraces the following subjects of instruction: In the Lower and Middle Departments — Religious Knowledge, Reading and Recitation, Writing and Dictation, Arithmetic as far as fractions, Outlines of English History, Geography, English Grammar and Composition, Drawing, French, Latin and Greek Etymology, Drill and Physical Exercises. Boys are admitted to the Lower Department when they can read, write, and work the first four rules of arithmetic. In the Upper Department, the previous course is extended, and also includes English Grammar and Composition, Mathematics, Commercial Arithmetic, Book-keeping, Mensuration, Physical Geography, Chemistry, Theoretical and Applied Mechanics, Natural Philosophy; Freehand, Geometrical, and Mechanical Drawing; Building Construction, French, German, Latin, Political and Social Economy, and the Laws of Health. The fees for this course are,—for sons of artisans under twelve years, only £3 a-year; over twelve years, £4 a-year. But pupils entering under the age of eleven continue at the same fees as long as they remain at the school. Parents not of the artisan class pay a higher fee; but the highest fee is only £6 a-year. In addition, moreover, to the free places which the managers of the Trade School are required by the scheme of the Endowed Schools Commissioners to provide for competition among boys from the elementary schools of Keighley, the

managers have, during the past year, voluntarily given free education in the Trade School for one year to two boys who passed such an examination as they prescribed; and the first two free scholars under this regulation were elected, one from the Keighley National School, and the other from the elementary school of a neighbouring hamlet, in July 1871. Here, then, we have at last a practical beginning made in putting into operation that plan for extending the benefits of secondary education to the children of working men, which has been for years the aim of statesmen of both political parties, which was one of the main topics dwelt on by Mr Forster in the speech in which he introduced the Endowed Schools Act, and which the preamble of that Act describes as one means of "fulfilling the main designs of the founders of endowed schools." No doubt there are several important elements in the problem, "how to extend the benefits of secondary education to working men's children," which have yet to be solved. It has yet to be seen whether, when free education at secondary schools is opened to the best scholars from the elementary schools, many working men will rise to the height of their opportunities, and permit their sons to continue their education beyond the elementary stage. Probably, to enable any considerable number of them to do this, something more than mere remissions of fees at the secondary schools must be offered, something in the shape of Maintenance Exhibitions, like the Scotch bursaries. And, in closing this account of the opening of the Keighley Trade School, it is worthy of record that, when the elementary schools of Keighley were invited to compete for these first free places, the president of the Institute, hearing from the elemen-

tary schoolmasters that some of their best boys' parents could not afford to let their sons continue their education any longer, came forward, and promised to each of the successful competitors a sum of £5, by way of a maintenance exhibition, so as to relieve the strain on their parents. If one may judge from Mr Forster's speech at Bradford in October, and from the well-known liberality of the princely manufacturers of Yorkshire, this action of the president of the Keighley Mechanics' Institute will not be unrivalled. And when the ancient endowments throughout England are so reorganised as to open a course of education free of charge to a fair number of the most deserving children of working men, and when the poor parents of these diligent and gifted children are by modern generosity encouraged to make and helped to bear the sacrifice of their children's wages for a few years beyond the elementary school age, then at last will there be a ladder of learning let down among our struggling poor, whose top reaches to the highest realms of culture.

The limits of this paper do not permit of a description of all the rest of the interesting and successful work which is being carried on in the Keighley Institute. But there is one simple and effectual means by which a person interested in such social reforms may inform himself as to the nature and value of this Keighley experiment. Let him communicate with either of the hon. secretaries of the Institute, and let him visit Keighley, and form his own opinion. Let him go over the buildings in the daytime, visit the Trade School, inquire into the course and system of instruction given there, note the number of scholars of all social classes with whom its benches are crowded, and the zeal and interest with which most of

them are working. And when he has compared what he will there see with what he can read about the old Keighley grammar school in the 9th and 18th volumes of the Reports of the Schools Inquiry Commissioners, let him say whether the Endowed Schools Commissioners have not done well in trusting the promoters of this Trade School with part of Drake's and Tonson's endowments. Then let him visit the Institute again in the evening. Let him attend one of the lectures on history, literature, voyages and travels, animal physiology, or the distribution of vegetable and animal life, which are given to working men in the great lecture-hall at a charge of 3d. a-piece; or one of those on elementary, practical, and analytical chemistry which are given in the laboratory. Let him attend the discussion class, and hear the members debating such questions as "The Utilisation of Sewage," "The Practicability of a Permissive Bill," "The Relations of Capital and Labour." Let him note the reading and conversation rooms and the library, well filled with subscribers. Let him visit the school of art, and see upwards of 100 scholars in all stages of instruction in drawing, painting, and designing. Let him go to the lecture-theatre, and see it nearly full of eager students of all ages and social ranks, from the Justice of the Peace and manufac-

turer down to the mill operative and Trade School boy. Let him see the head-master of the Trade School conducting a large night-class of artisans, varying in age from 18 to 40, in the higher rules of arithmetic, and drafting them out into the science classes as they begin to show the requisite proficiency. Lastly, let him observe that there is at this Institute, irrespectively of all day-school work, a nightly attendance of nearly 400 young men and women, nearly all of whom are artisans, and who are all in search of intellectual improvement;—and then let him say whether the enterprise and courage, the firm faith in the value of learning, the public spirit and generosity of the men of this Yorkshire town, have not already been richly rewarded, and whether their example does not preach to many other manufacturing towns of England to go and do likewise.

The last part of this great Keighley experiment is not yet tested. The first Endowed Girls' School, established by the Commissioners under Mr Forster's Act, has just been opened in Keighley. The governors have appointed, as principal teacher, a lady who has had considerable scholastic experience; and those who are interested in improving the education of girls will not fail to learn much from the success or failure of this school during the next ten years.

THE REASONABLE FEARS OF THE COUNTRY.

THE signs of the time are not reassuring. Everywhere men are anxious about the government of the country, and about late and coming legislation; but apprehension has not yet taken definite shape; there is no agreement as to the danger that is most imminent, only a perplexing fear such as overcomes the animal world before a convulsion of nature. From some quarters—quarters in which the march toward anarchy has hitherto been regarded with complacency—there is a sound of sudden fright, as when an abyss is discovered almost beneath the feet of the heedless adventurer. From others there is an alarm of despotism felt but not understood. And where the disposition to look forward is less strong, there is at least a perception of present derangement. The machinery of government seems to be out of joint. A dead-lock is avoided by only some desperate wrench. Damage and confusion are evident in all departments of the State.

Some glib apologist of our rulers may say—possibly has said—that in the diversity of the alarms lies the proof of their wisdom and moderation. While many are terrified by the prospect of despotic rule, many more start at the thought of all rule and all law being defied and outraged. Hence it may be deduced that administration moves in a dignified and even course; for the nervous on both sides, capable of regarding things in only one light, rush to the extremes of the balance and neutralise each other, while a happy equilibrium remains for the body of the nation. But confidence inspired through such an argument as this would be very false confidence. The pretence will not bear

examination, yields at the first challenge. For the answer which confutes it is, that people do not disagree as to the evil tendencies of any one movement or act, but there are so many things done and tolerated, pointing apparently in opposite directions though all are dangerous, that every objector has reason on his side, though every one may not give prominence to the same mischief. The complainants do not contradict each other; for unhappily it is possible, in a diseased commonwealth, for licence and despotism to coexist, and to work together to the same ends, anarchy and ruin. If revolution be balked by any appointed safeguard, tyranny will step in and sweep the barrier away: if tyranny excite apprehension or rouse opposition, revolution, which hopes to profit by it, will for a time uphold tyranny.

We say again, then, and we defy contradiction, that on all sides there are dissatisfaction and alarm; and it will not be difficult to show that both are well founded.

The displacement of the reigning family, the dismemberment of the empire, and the spoliation of property, are openly and strenuously recommended to large bodies of the people. The attack upon property, it might have been foreseen, would carry consternation to the minds of all who have much to lose; and one was quite prepared to find it followed by a note of disapproval and resistance. But the attack upon the Royal Family and on the form of our government, being aimed at no particular class or interest, was not so likely to provoke active opposition, however much the nation might condemn at heart, as we know it did condemn, this outrageous

proposition. It is one of those indecorous subjects which respectable men cannot discuss, though it be to refute and reprobate them. Only indirectly can such assaults be met, and, till some fit occasion offer for the expression of proper feeling, the railers have all the talk to themselves. An occasion, however, has arisen, and the nation has given voice to its sentiments. It pleased Providence to afflict the heir to the throne, the personage against whose birthright the wicked schemes were directed, with a grievous malady which laid him on what seemed to be the bed of death. There was mourning and dismay throughout the royal house; princes, scared by the cruel tidings, hurried to the chamber of mourning; over the sufferer wept the gracious stranger whom England has taken to her heart, the young Princess against whom the decree of widowhood appeared to have gone forth: and over him bent the widowed Sovereign, sorely stricken already, and now bowing the head beneath another expected arrow of the Almighty. But the august mourners were not alone in their distress. The sound of their wailing went out over the whole land, casting a gloom upon every town, every village, upon every hearth; and from east and west, and north and south, went back an outpouring of sympathy which showed that the heart of the nation was truly moved, and which into those chambers of affliction must have brought comfort even under the shadow of death. This expression of loyalty was the true answer to the assailants of the Royal Family—this genuine condolence of the whole people, at which foreigners lifted up their hands in utter amazement. Now we believe that had this deep affliction been attended by a different combination of circumstances, the hearts of the nation

would have beaten in unison with those of the Royal Family; but we feel sure that but for the blustering about a republic, our sympathy would have been less demonstrative though not less sincere. The demonstration, not the depth of the feeling, was undoubtedly due to the indignation, doubt, and anxiety aroused within us by the apostles of revolution, but hitherto pent up in our breasts because we could not for shame reply to the revolting proposals. Here then is an evidence that the mind of the country is in a state of unrest, and by-and-by we will charge this, as we will all the anxieties which beset us, on the real authors of them. But we have more to say about the anxieties themselves.

It is not only a change in the form of our government which we have been obliged to hear propounded; we have been threatened, too, with disintegration of the empire, and a flame would appear to have been kindled which, as we cannot hope that a timid, popularity-hunting Government will suppress it, may lead us into the horrors of civil war. The cry for Home Rule has been once more raised in Ireland, and will no doubt be continued until it shall lead to wild and savage deeds. Nay, why do we say until? Is not Ireland already actively disaffected and blood-stained? Hardly a day passes that we do not hear from thence of murders or threatenings to murder; and only a few weeks have elapsed since a murderer, about whose guilt there could not be the smallest doubt, was acquitted, and hailed (because he *was* a murderer) with the congratulatory acclamations of assembled thousands, while his counsel described this notable failure of justice as a great constitutional triumph! Bad, however, as things may be, it is certain that worse are intended. We may

expect immediately active steps to be taken for the separation of Ireland from the rest of the empire, and we may expect that they will be accompanied by the usual terrorism and sedition. It is true that we have the asseveration of the Prime Minister that separation will not be allowed; but who will be reassured by this? The averment may have strictly corresponded with his present intention and convictions; but do we not know that he can slip his convictions off and on as he does his gloves, making them entirely compatible with his interests? The present disposition of so versatile a politician is without significance, or rather, judging by what is known of his natural history, it may be taken as an earnest that he will some day join the Home Rule movement. Indeed it is difficult to see from what quarter we can derive any comfort concerning Ireland; only a dark and bloody future seems to open for it. And this after all the vaunted nostrums which amid so much excitement and dissension have been administered to it. We were told, (were we not?) that, under the healing treatment of the present Government, the ills of Ireland, now for the first time understood and rationally dealt with, would disappear, and all would be harmony and peace in that hitherto distracted land. Do

the deeds and the agitation to which we pointed above, prove or foreshadow such happy result? If we could see the least sign of improvement we would not be impatient for the thorough cure. But the signs point just the other way. Ireland is manifestly going from bad to worse, and the only judgment that can be formed of the treatment is, that it has been irrational and injurious. No admission of failure can ever be expected from a quack. When the patient is failing he says, "You do not take enough of my medicine;" and after the patient has died, he says, "Ah! he should have taken more pills." Cold comfort this, though, for the weeping survivors; and friends who have any discretion will dismiss the empiric before it comes to this. There are means enough of judging whether or not there is virtue in the remedies, after a reasonable trial, and none can be excused for letting himself be fooled on to destruction by specious promises. This truth is no doubt felt, and it will, by-and-by, be confessed, by those who have been induced to support Mr Gladstone's Government by the belief that it could pacify Ireland. It has done exactly the reverse.* Ireland is more diseased than it ever was, and the doubtful issue of the disorder raises another

* The Marquess of Hartington, when addressing his constituents at Knighton, in January, said: "They had been told by their opponents that their policy had failed because it had not altogether suppressed disaffection, and in some places agrarian crime, and also that there had lately arisen a new and somewhat noisy agitation which its promoters were pleased to call 'Home Rule.' He denied emphatically that the policy of the Government had failed. In the first place, some little limit should be granted for the operation of the remedial measures which had been passed. They could not expect a charm to supersede the application of the spirit of justice and conciliation for the suppression of animosities and jealousies which had existed for centuries." This, if it means anything, is an admission that the so-called remedial measures for Ireland have been followed by no good result. Against these visible proofs of failure we have nothing to reassure us but the promises and assertions of the authors of the measures—the usual quack's assurance while he is killing the patient, "Wait and take more medicine." We prefer not to accept the promises of Ministers, but to judge for ourselves from the three years' experience we have had of Irish legislation.

of those anxieties which are weighing like nightmares upon the heart of the nation.

Again, a league widely extended throughout Europe, and daily gaining strength, is, with a Stentor's voice, menacing all property, whether it be in land or in commercial or manufacturing capital. It surely never occurred to the capitalists and financiers who any time within these last forty years have been supporting what they called progress, and liberal and enlightened legislation, that they were preparing the way of communism, and making its paths straight. And yet so it was. The advantages which they thought they had secured for themselves at the expense of the rest of the community they were to possess only for a season, while a ruder power, based upon terror and violence, should be gathering its forces and getting ready for a general spoliation. The hideous spectre communism has reared its head, and is glaring savagely on all the bonds and institutions which hold society together, and are the framework of nations. The laws of order once inverted cannot be rectified at will, as those who first tamper with them always imagine that they can. The flood-gates foolishly opened can be closed no more till after fierce battle and victory. Of reckless innovation may be said what the poet wrote of personified Sin—

"She opened, but to shut
Excelled her power; the gates wide open
stood,
That with extended wings a bannered
host
Under spread ensigns marching might
pass through."

It boots not, however, for our present purpose to retrace the steps by which this terror has grown to its present dimensions, or was first produced. There the terror is. The capitalist finds himself face to face

with Socialists, Communists, International Leagues, Workmen's Associations, Trades-unions, and, liberal though he may call himself, starts back amazed at the sight of liberalism grown to its natural development, wrought out to its inevitable end. We have the key now to that revulsion of feeling which took place among our fathers, when many who had been cozened by specious phrases of philanthropists and regenerators were suddenly struck dumb by the atrocities of the first French Revolution. The great Plutocracy is confronted by the great Democracy, and cowers before the apparition. Again we note a large class on whom a vague panic has seized.

We wish to do more, though, than to call attention to these many anxieties; we desire to show how it is that all at once so many monsters are scaring society. There are at all times in the world the germs of such maleficent influences; but in healthy times they are, by the robust arm of good government, and the moral force of a sound community, banished to the outskirts of society, where in darkness and squalor they plot their wickedness, and, amid the grinding of savage teeth and the rolling of bloodshot eyes, they yell out to the bats and owls their denunciations of order. So checked and repudiated they are harmless. But how is it that we see them now all advancing boldly into daylight, propounding their abominable doctrines, and uttering their ominous threats to the public ear? It is unquestionably the weakness and the baseness of governments which have given them confidence; and their prevalence now in England is due to the inefficient, nay, the dangerous and ruinous, Ministry that for three years past has been, unconsciously perhaps, but certainly, assailing or undermining every rallying-place of

society, every stronghold of order. We say that the whole tenor of the present Administration—their acts, their language, their tolerances (and especially those of the Prime Minister)—has heedlessly encouraged the advocates of plunder and violence, sedition and blasphemy, and of every design hostile to the public weal, to come out of the holes where they have been slinking, and to publish their noxious doctrines in the ears of the whole people. The wounds which the Administration has inflicted on religion; its refusal to suppress riot, outrage, and murder in Ireland in 1869; Mr Gladstone's fatherly communications with Finlen and his rabble; the elevation to the bench of a ringleader in a notorious tumult; the reluctance at all times to deal with bold and hardy mobs; the Prime Minister's quotation in public from a blasphemous, scurrilous publication, so as to earn the thanks of Mr Bradlaugh for extending the sale of it: these are but a few of the many facts which prove the truth of what we say, and through which shelter and encouragement have been afforded to the powers of mischief.

We ask of the many who are now with reason alarmed, not to passively accept our explanation of their uneasiness, but to consider for themselves whether the troubles be not traceable to the cause which we have pointed out. It is best to recognise this connection, as every reflecting man must inevitably do, and we shall not be long in devising a remedy.

So far we have called attention only to the fears of the people and the causes of those fears, induced to that course by the scandals which have been crying aloud, throughout the Christmas season, and the early days of the year. But let us turn for a while from forebodings and look at past doings which have

justly roused the public indignation. We had the whole year 1871 left barren of legislation, except for a measure made law, not by the constitutional operation of the Legislature, but by the arbitrary act of an ill-advised Minister. Of that act we shall have more to say shortly; but we desire to note now how the whole year was wasted through the inability of the Government to submit to Parliament measures which rational men could hope to pass, and through their inability to conduct with any prudence or tact the few measures which, but for that inability, a subservient majority might have passed. Can any one yet forget the abortive miserable scheme that was brought forward for raising a revenue, or the derision with which it was received by the House of Commons and the country, or the ignominious haste with which it was smothered by its dull authors; or the aggravated income-tax, to which, in sheer despair of a well-devised tax, the nation was obliged to submit? It is as well to remember all this; because, unless we look sharply and speedily to our own interests at the meeting of Parliament, our pockets are likely to be again experimented on by the same financial dunces. We ought not to forget either—as it is a specimen of the candour to be expected from a highly virtuous Minister—the line of argument resorted to by Mr Gladstone when he attempted by a quirk of logic to take the unhappy words about England going to war with or without allies, out of the mouth of Mr Odo Russell, and to put them in the mouth of Prince Bismark. It was quite right that he should feel ashamed of the figure which England had been made to cut in that transaction; but this weak attempt at repudiation only showed how indefensible was his share in the blunder, and only caused the

lip of every upright man to curl in pity of the convicted sophist. There is no need to call to remembrance the most ill-judged measure of the session, the Army Regulation Act. It will be remembered for many a year: first, by the demands which it will make on the pockets of the people; and, secondly, by its having been the occasion of Mr Gladstone's hitherto most audacious exercise of despotic power. It is an Act of which the mildest remarks that can truly be made are, that it was uncalled for, that it is hazardous in the extreme, and that it will certainly be very expensive. It will be but small consolation by-and-by to the small shopkeeper, who will year by year have to contribute to the redemption of officers' commissions, that he has got rid of the system of purchase; and he is very likely, as he unwillingly hands over his small earnings to the tax-gatherer, to curse the cheap Government which beguiled him of his vote as the dearest in the world. But there will be nothing very remarkable in this. It is only what always happens after a cheap Government has made a successful bid for power.* But the first expense of redemption is not the consequence most to be dreaded. There will undoubtedly be entailed upon us, before many years have passed, greater and permanent charges for superannuations and for increased pay while officers are serving. The present pittances are so contemptible, that none but gentlemen of independent fortune will or can accept them as the adequate wages of a ser-

vice which, if it is not always attended by danger and wounds and death, leads men to unhealthy climates, necessitates sudden and trying changes, and is expensive in its moves, its dress, and its living. In a few years' time, when many of the purchase men will have been bought out, promotion must come to a stand, unless it be stimulated by a provision for retirement which will be ruinous to the nation. The prestige of the profession having departed, vulgar aspirants, finding its offices open to them, may flatter themselves for a time that, prejudices having been removed, the country has at length become sensible of their merits; but, alas! they will soon find (as a veteran lately lost to us† foretold that they would) that they have not been raised in the world, but that the army has been brought down to their level. Nor is loss of tone to the service the only or the chief evil that will result. We conceive that the discipline was principally due to the personal influence of the officers—no other influence will ever subordinate Englishmen; and when this shall be wholly gone, most serious results may be looked for, as we have before taken occasion to show.‡ In actual war we shall no doubt for high pay get people to fight for us, but we question whether in time of peace discipline may not wholly disappear. It is not beyond possibility that, when once the officers are lowered as a class, short-sighted politicians may think fit to use the troops for political purposes, which again may lead to the aggregation of bands of

* Mr Vernon Harcourt, in his speech at Oxford on 1st January 1872, after stating that the present Government in its first years of office had reduced the public expenditure by five millions, went on to say: "Things are not so satisfactory now. We come down to you at a period of the year when constituents are particularly sensitive on such subjects with an income-tax increased by one-half, and with the public expenditure restored to a sum between 72 millions and 73 millions."

† F.-M. Sir J. Burgoyne.

‡ Blackwood's Magazine for March 1871, art. "The Sick Army and its Doctors."

free lances, and to certain control-lings of the long gown by arms, which things are not favourable to liberty. But the Act is in force now; what, then, is the use of going over all these objections to it? The use is this, that when people begin to perceive, as they shortly will, perhaps as they already do, the great blunder that has been committed, they may see clearly to whom they owe the difficulties that are coming upon them. The measure was snatched out of the hands of Parliament: it became law contrary to the opinion and wish of one branch of the Legislature, and Ministers are to the fullest extent responsible for it. We observe that one or two of the Ministerial party have lately been venturing to crow feebly over what they would have us believe to be a success. In particular, the ex-Minister Mr Childers has informed his constituents at Pontefract, that although the Army Act was vehemently opposed in its passage through Parliament, yet, that now when it is *un fait accompli*, every one allows it to be a most just and useful measure. We can only reply that we believe the measure to be most hazardous, and that we regard Mr Childers's assertion respecting the opinion of the public as one of the most impudent ever made. The general public never understood much about the purchase question, and cares very little about it now. What it really feels will be shown when it is called upon to pay the bill. As for those who understand the aim of the Act, we know of no one who looks upon it without the greatest apprehension. Had the opposition to it proceeded from disappointed expectation, or from irritation at the interference of Parliament, as Mr Childers would have us believe, then it is very likely that opinion might have sobered down after the change was irrevoc-

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cably made. But the opposition proceeded from far more patriotic feeling than Ministers will allow, and the objections to the Act are as strong now as ever they were. Military men, almost without exception, while resolving and endeavouring to make the best of what is inevitable, speak of the change with much misgiving as regards the efficiency of our future army, and with something very like despair as regards the tone, social standing, and fraternity which have hitherto belonged to the profession.

With much surprise and very little comfort we have read the following in the 'Times' of Jan. 8th:—

"Men do not enter the army to make money. They are attracted by the honourable position taken at once on their entrance, by the certainty of good fellowship, and, in the best cases, by the prospect of an adventurous life with great possibilities in the future. Nor does the pay represent more than a part of the actual and present advantages offered to the youth who enters the army. He has good quarters and coals supplied him free of charge, and a soldier-servant. In his mess-room he has the use of plate accumulated by his predecessors; he can offer to any friend, at a trifling cost, agreeable entertainment, devised and perfected by others, older and more experienced in society than himself; and he is brought into more or less familiar association with men whose names are, or will be, in everybody's mouth."

This is the picture of one phase of military life *as it was*: but, thanks to the 'Times' and the Ministers whom it supports, the service is shorn of all the captivations that were more alluring than money. The aspirant for military service is *forced* now to look upon the money payment as the only equivalent for the life he may devote to it.

Mr Cardwell also has made a tentative speech about the Act. His arguments were directed against the

theory of a system of purchase, and were most clearly and logically accumulated to a triumphant Q. E. D. As they were only the same that we have heard a thousand times, and as we have not the least wish to refute them, if that were possible, we gladly leave to the right honourable gentleman his rhetorical triumph, without dissecting his speech. But we beg to remark, that the question has been, and is, not whether the system of purchase was an admirable or desirable one in theory, but whether in practice it was safe and expedient to abolish it in the violent manner, at the great expense, and with the entire want of provision for consequences, that have marked the Ministerial method of dealing with it. It is, moreover, especially desirable that attention should be called to a danger arising out of this measure, which is one of the most important things connected with it, although not mentioned in Mr Cardwell's speech. We allude to the promised new method of promotion, in which merit alone is to obtain a preference. Any one who may have observed the manner in which brevet-promotions and selections for special appointments have been hitherto made, will not expect merit to be much attended to when the regimental promotion of the whole army shall be given at the discretion of a Minister, but will rather think that the army, up to the present time, has been supremely fortunate in having a system of regimental promotion with which political jobbery could not largely interfere. Henceforth every vacancy in the army will be filled according to the will of a Minister, who will be himself dependent upon the votes of the House of Commons for the retention of his place. Is it in human nature for a person so situated

to be deaf to the solicitations of men who have votes to give, or who can influence votes? We know very well that votes are exceedingly valuable at times, and that those who give them in support of Ministers are accustomed to ask little favours of the men in office. If the favour so asked should chance to be promotion for relatives or friends, is it at all probable that mere desert would have any chance against claims so supported? We have not a hope of promotion in the future being kept clear of the influences of political jobbery and personal favour. And there is yet another point which will require the sharpest watchfulness of the nation. It is much to be feared that Ministers, trammelled by their notorious boasts about reduced Army Estimates, will try to screen the extravagance of which they have been guilty by robbing us of some of the necessary means of defence. A reduction in our small provision of men and *matériel*, or in the accessories which are required to make those men and that *matériel* effective, should be most jealously prevented. The position in which Ministers stand with regard to this matter is *most dangerous* to the country. Popular clamour, often inconsistent, has lately demanded two things which contradict each other, and Ministers stand pledged to indulge it in both desires. It has demanded abolition of the purchase and sale of commissions, and it has demanded a reduction of army expenditure. The demand involving expense has been conceded, and the problem now is how to keep down the estimates. That, be it remembered, can be done only by taking from the defences of the country, which last year were generally admitted to be insufficient.* The attempt may not be made to

* Mr Vernon Harcourt, in a letter to the 'Times' of 9th January, says that he would

disband the men enlisted last year, or to send the guns to rust in the marshes; but it is very likely indeed that some expenditure essential to the wellbeing of the army, and the withholding of which will be keenly felt hereafter, though the effect may not be immediately perceptible to non-professional eyes, will be attempted, and we shall be rendered liable in case of attack to lose all that we have. It does not matter how the reduction may be made, whether by leaving the troops without necessary barracks or stores, by reducing pay, by imposing an unreasonable amount of work, by denying adequate pensions to worn-out servants,—all or any of these must ultimately cripple us; and, as we said before, the greatest vigilance should be used to prevent parsimony of this kind. We have got the Army Act now, more's the pity! and it is of vital importance that we should face the consequences of it like men, not attempting to emasculate the substance because we have been tempted to run after a shadow, but paying philosophically for our whistle that we have chosen to purchase at so enormous a price, and not adding to our loss by robbing the service of its essentials. Mr Cardwell promised to put the War Department in such order that panics should be impossible in the future. We shall see how he keeps his word. If alarm were to be caused just now, our position would not be enviable. With the army divorced from its old traditions and expectations—with the bonds which held it together rudely severed—with the War Office in a state of chaos,—we should have some reason to remember Mr Cardwell if danger did threaten.

As another example of what cheap government leads to, let us cite the condition of the Admiralty and Navy; and, as the case which has horrified the people more than any other, let us speak of the loss of H.M.S. *Megara*, of which we gave an account last month. We invite every honest, every humane man in the kingdom, to join in denouncing this frightful *noyade*. More than three hundred of our people sent to cross the great ocean in an iron ship whose bottom plates could be bent like a sheet of tin, and were corroded with rust in various places, so that a push from a man's finger could open her hull and bring the sea in! If this had happened through carelessness and inattention, it would have been a bad enough case, but the culpability is fifty times greater than neglect. The *Megara* might have been *known* to be unseaworthy if the passion for economy had not obscured perception, and years ago she was placed at the bottom of the list of troopships, to be employed on only short voyages; therefore it was with a blindness much to be regretted that these three hundred and odd victims were put into her and desired to take her to Australia. An examination of the ship or of her records, a consideration for the sailors and the stores on board, equal to what was shown for economy, would have prevented this world wide scandal. We speak with horror of the scuttling of ships by pirates and of the drownings of the first French Revolution; but really, if we regard the results alone, negligence or want of judgment in this case has been as hurtful as the crimes of the corsair or the revolutionists. The unfortunate mariners were exposed to this

have the estimates reduced arbitrarily to a stated low sum, and, to effect this, give up "efficiency" altogether. This is, at any rate, a plain and honest announcement, which we can understand, if we cannot agree with it. The cant about "economy and efficiency" is what we cannot away with. It is mere delusion.

hazard because Mr Gladstone's Government is a cheap Government, and by hook or by crook must make a show of what it calls economy. When it suits his purpose Mr Gladstone can be very unctuous about his "own flesh and blood;" but he clearly shows that, if it be his own, he is likely to do as he will with it. There must, however, be hundreds of English men and of English women who are truly "own flesh and blood" of the men whose lives were so hazarded; and there must be thousands who have "own flesh and blood" by ill chance in her Majesty's Navy, who are liable to be sent out any day to perish, unless sound and seaworthy ships shall be provided. Let these, if they really care for their flesh and blood, make their indignation heard and felt before more sacrifices are sent afloat. Every crew cannot have the fortune of the crew of the *Megæra*—for no doubt they thought it good fortune to be half starved on a barren rock when the alternative was to founder in a rotten ship; and unless the people take this matter up a little seriously, they will never have much peace of mind concerning any flesh and blood of theirs which may be on the ocean in a vessel belonging to the Crown. For our own part we could wish that the miseries which befel the gallant Captain and crew of the *Megæra* had fallen upon some of the right honourable and honourable skinflints through whose fault these miseries were caused. Our Premier must have been supremely unhappy in such a situation as St Paul's Island. There was not a tree to cut down, unless a cabbage run to seed could be so styled—not even a *Upas*-tree; and as for his one other accomplishment, Jack would tell him that no commodity was at such a discount there as "jaw." With Mr Cardwell things might have been a little bet-

ter. It seems that the marines were all sheltered in a hut by themselves, and the right honourable gentleman might in the long evenings have discoursed to them by the hour, without fear of contradiction or unbelief, of muskets and rifles lying hidden in enchanted armouries, and waiting the summons of him, the great wizard, to become apparent and put the enemies of England to confusion. The drawback to this enjoyment would have proceeded from the neighbourhood in which the marines' hut was supposed to be. The ground below it smoked palpably, and the floorstones were so hot that they could not be touched by a naked finger or foot. In short, the marines believed themselves to be in a very uncanny vicinity; so that while, on the one hand, the Secretary of State for War might have expatiated on his resources to an infinitely credulous audience, on the other there would have been danger of slipping straight through into Phlegethon, caught with a tale for the marines upon his tongue. There would be no employment there for Mr Göschen's profound nautical knowledge, but he would be likely to learn a little pity for poor seamen; Mr Lowe might propound blundering budgets to the winds and waves which could not laugh at him; and Mr Bruce might lament that his great legislative and administrative talents had no field for exercise. The Lord Chancellor might, with profit, in that solitude think over and repent of his unwarrantable law appointments; and, altogether, the punishment would be well merited and very wholesome.

There is, indeed, no mean or hurtful shift to which Ministers may not be driven who have acceded to office on the promise of doing the business of the country cheaply. They must know well when they undertake the task—and the nation

ought to know well, if experience can teach it—that cheap government of a great country for any length of time is impossible. Boastful estimates may be presented for a year or two by simply allowing the public service to be without the necessary provision; but this is only postponing the evil day. The shortcomings are soon made manifest, and then the apparent saving has to be compensated for by a lavish outlay. This must be familiar to all who have studied the English history of the last two centuries, even superficially. But we doubt if it be want of knowledge which causes the deceit: it is rather a passion for cheap dealing, inveterate in the nation, and so dominant that an inevitable penalty to be paid in the early future is ineffectual to check or control it. Nominal cheapness is perhaps the most attractive lure that can be held out to John Bull. It does not matter how or where it may be presented to him, or how much he may have smarted from it before: again and again he is ready to take the bait. If the reader happens to know anything of a country town, he must have some acquaintance with a periodical visitor thereto, calling himself *Cheap John*. This malefactor, a few months ago probably, made a hasty retreat from the place under cover of night or of the Sabbath-day, leaving behind him murmurs and indignation and threatenings, to encounter which would not have been good for his health. But he has calculated with instinctive accuracy the period by which the cheap mania will have resumed its ascendancy in the burgher and bumpkin minds, and there he is again on the front of the cart “as bold as brass,” as some of his former victims are likely to put it, parading his novelties, narrating his wonderful adventures since last visit, instinctively distinguishing among the

crowd and then roasting one or two rural butts, so as to put the rest in good-humour, and perhaps venturing on a facetious allusion to his last successful foray in that market-place. He has all sorts of explanations to offer of any little disappointments which his last visit may have entailed; but there seems to be a general understanding that this is mere matter of form, and tolerable only for the sake of the jokes, and impertinence, and the bold romance by which it is distinguished. His distress at the perfidy of his manufacturers, who have made princely fortunes through his custom, and yet on one recent occasion imposed articles of only ordinary quality on his good-nature; his accounts of the vengeance, personal and commercial, which he has been compelled to take in consequence; his entire rectification of defects, and attainment of absolute perfection in this last assortment,—are they not stamped on the memories of all who have ever stood about his cart? and do not the coarse jokes, the insulting personalities, and the imperturbable effrontery, present themselves again with the remembered scene? But his real reliance for pardon is not in his excuses or his protestations; it is his cheap dealing which shall procure him impunity for the past, and bring him in now another harvest with which he will go away rejoicing. There may be a difficulty about his first sale; but he knows how to overcome that; and, having broken the ice, he goes on selling. The market people and rustics spreading into the town parade their bargains to their acquaintances, and thereupon artificers, with aprons wound round their waists, and petty dealers with undried ink in their pens behind their ears, run once more to the cart of the wonderful merchant, to be gulled for the twentieth time. Before concluding this

illustration, we would wish to make mention of one specimen of the Cheap John kind, rather out of the common run, who once or twice came under our notice. He was not at all of the ordinary type. Impudent of course he was, and of an unbounded flux of words with scant meaning; but, for the jolly, jesting, saucy quality usually so essential to this business, he had none of it. On the contrary, at his first appearance he was seen to be of a sour elongated visage, with only serious remarks, entreating the people to believe in him for their own sakes—not for his. He was not as other Cheap Johns are; but contrariwise, he came to deliver his brethren from the manœuvres of all profane Cheap Johns. He commenced proceedings by singing a hymn; and, instead of the usual banter and amusing anecdotes, exhorted everybody to lead an honest and religious life as he did; and he made such a long-winded speech about the parish church (which could be seen from where his cart stood), and about the indissoluble obligation of the whole community to it, that the countrymen began to get tired, and some of them, especially the Dissenters, made a move as if to leave the assembly. He whistled them back, however, and took a great harvest of money, for they all thought him a most excellent and trustworthy man. He was so thoroughly in earnest, they kept saying—and so he was. It is in our recollection, too, that he had with him an ass of a brother, who, when he retired into the cart to refresh or to rest his jaws for a minute (for he *did* talk at a wonderful rate), would come out and sound his praises, making such impious comparisons to recommend him, that we dare not write down the shocking sayings. The articles which he left behind in exchange for the money

which he pocketed were, if possible, more worthless than those of ordinary Johns; but, strange to say, although there was much disappointment there was not very hot indignation. So excellent a man, the people said, would never willingly have imposed on them—he must himself have been imposed upon. If he had been a rogue he would have covered his knavery by audacity and banter; but instead of doing this he had been singularly candid and confiding, and laid open to them all the thoughts of his innocent bosom. Indeed there were many who, although they had no particular wish to deal with him again, yet expressed a desire to see and hear this remarkable Cheap John once more. Well, he came after some time, and such a fuss there was all through the place, when it became known that the serious Cheap John was in the market again. Half the population turned out, and people who, in an ordinary way, would have thought that they imperilled themselves greatly by listening to a vagabond hawker, struggled for places among his audience. There was a murmur, almost a cheer, of recognition, when the sanctimonious visage appeared from behind the curtains of the cart; and the hush was remarkable when the man began to talk, as he did in half a second, and kept it going too. Some of the hearers had brought their hymn-books, and were rather disappointed when they found there was to be no singing this time. Much more were they disturbed when the opening address, though as little as ever approaching to liveliness, yet took quite an unexpected turn. The Church on whose behalf he had been formerly so fluent, he now pointed at with reproach, abused it frightfully but solemnly, and, after a while, he said the best thing they could do would be to pull

it down, and he offered to lead the attack upon it. The Dissenters present, and persons who were on the constables' list, cheered this lustily; but the more respectable portion of the bystanders were completely puzzled. They still felt sure from his manner that he couldn't mean any harm—and he was *so* earnest; and yet this was queer doctrine, and unlike his former advice. He told them, however, that he wished for no concealments, that he never did anything wrong, and, however strange his sentiments might appear, he must not be judged as another man in similar circumstances would. Then he called them his dear brothers, and with the utmost frankness showed them his whole heart. His affection for the Church had, he said, damaged his business greatly, and he had long seen that the other line was the one for making money. This consideration would never have changed him, of course, but by a coincidence his convictions had gone quite round the circle, and were now pointing right against their old direction. This was the reward of integrity, because he could now, without bruising his conscience, drive a prosperous business. And he laid bare his heart to them again, and began to pick up their money. But as he went on selling, he dropped some remarks about horse-racing which did not take well; and with all his cleverness they could perceive that he prevaricated unscrupulously, and that he was not at all particular about keeping within the law in his dealings when he got a chance of breaking it. Towards evening he consummated his disfavour by repeating (still with his severe look and unctuous manner) a passage from a ribald song, the scandal of the whole neighbourhood, and composed and published by the greatest reprobate in it. The alarm and wrath which had been

smouldering for some time now began to break forth. The Cheap John laid his hand upon his heart and protested as before; but his tricks were getting stale, and men began to use their own judgments again; the murmurs grew to a clamour and the clamour to a tumult, in which the virtuous hawker and his cart were not much respected; and really the end of the affair was so grave a matter, that we don't like to proceed and say what was the fate of that specious character. That by the way.

We were led to the mention of the chapmen, that we might show how universal in this country is the passion for cheapness irrespectively of quality. John Bull may be caught again and again by means of it. It is one of the weak points in his character. But though it may be only natural for Cheap Johns and their like to profit by this infirmity, what shall we say when educated men, who well know what they are doing, and the mischiefs they are entailing, condescend to play on it for the sake of obtaining office? Surely resort to so paltry a device should shut off confidence, and invite the severest scrutiny of their every other act. The duty of a governor is, not to rule the people by encouraging the lowest and least commendable of their propensities, but to lead their minds to the pursuit of nobler things, so that the spirit of the nation may be elevated and not debased. Now let any man consider the course taken by Mr Gladstone's Government—its dealings with Russia and America on the one hand, and its tampering with our *penchant* for cheapness on the other—and he cannot fail to understand in what direction the national mind is being led.

It was said above that encouragement to licence, and despotic acts, are sometimes found working together when the State is in an

unhealthy condition. And we are all witnesses of the truth of this proposition. Last summer, while everything was inclining to that contempt for law and order which has been so scandalously exhibited in the autumn and winter, we were startled by the most despotic act that has been committed since the days of the Stuarts. A measure to which the attention of Parliament had been directed in a speech from the Throne, and which had been introduced to the Legislature by Ministers themselves, was suddenly snatched from the cognisance of the legislative bodies, and made illegal law by a violent act of prerogative. The ordinary course of legislation was too slow for a Minister made desperate by a series of failures extending over a session, and unable to control his temper or to refrain from an abuse of power which could soothe his vanity. The strait he was in is nothing to us. What we have to look at is the audacious inroad on the Constitution, which for the paltriest of objects was thus unhesitatingly made. The House of Lords did not move fast enough with the Army Bill to satisfy the impatient Minister, and so he himself disposed of the Bill by a Royal Warrant. This very important Bill required more and deep consideration, the result of which might have been to show that it was very imperfect, and required to be recast. Such a proof would have amounted to an imputation on Mr Gladstone's ability, and must be averted at all hazards. What was the Constitution or the

public safety in comparison of Mr Gladstone's self-esteem?

The ground on which the unscrupulous Minister hoped that his conduct would be condoned was, undoubtedly, that he had erred for the purpose of revolutionising one of our institutions, and was therefore entitled to the protection of revolutionists. But we have yet to see whether there be not in the heart of the country, if not on its surface, a respect for order and for right which will resent this *brusque* method of removing constitutional impediments, and teach the experimentalist that the constituted powers of the State are superior to the will of any placeman. And the lesson is urgently required; for, as if to show us that the treatment of the Army Bill was no exceptional proceeding, we have lately been favoured with another exhibition of the Premier's wilfulness, and his disregard for even a law made at the instance of his own Administration. We allude to the well-known scandal, condemned by all parties, connected with the promotion of Sir R. Collier. It is not a question the merits of which we need argue, for there are hardly two opinions as to its being wrong; and, to take away all ground for cavil, there is on record the protest, on strictly legal grounds, of the Chief-Justice of England against this most ill-advised act. But it is one which we cite in proof of the recklessness of the Minister who, for an object of very inferior importance, was ready to insult the law and to brave opinion.* It

* We should not have ventured to write the words which we are about to quote, lest they should be set down to the extravagance of party rancour. But as they have been used by a prominent Liberal organ, the London 'Examiner' of 13th January, it is expected that they will be considered no stronger than the occasion calls for.—"This seems to be the unhappy fate of Mr Gladstone's Government. Its political sins have been so gratuitous, and, until they were committed, so strangely improbable, that in a more theological age they would have been explained by supramundane, if not by diabolical, agency." Testimonials like this, warm but not fulsome, must amply compensate for any little reproach of inconsistency which Mr Gladstone may have incurred by turning his coat in favour of the Radical party.

would be rash to predict how the reckoning will end; but if ever there can be a time when a defence of the laws and of the Constitution by the whole body of the nation is necessary—if ever the maxim, “*obstat principiis*,” is applicable in public affairs—this is the season. We have seen what Mr Gladstone will do if he can, and what he can do if we allow him. He will use his power so injudiciously as to bring about our subjugation under the tyranny of democracy, and he will derive his power from the ignorant and unreflecting masses. How far will this state of things be from Napoleonism? This may be a startling way of putting the case; but let any one reflect on the situation, and he will see that the Minister, if supported at all in his presumptuous acts, (which Heaven forefend!) will be supported by those who will demand hereafter from him as the price of their protection to have order, property, and decency placed at their mercy. It is not a crisis calling for party action; it is an occasion demanding a great national effort—a time when all to whom justice and the power of the law are dear must set themselves in array against the lawless and the wielders of brute force. To condemn Mr Gladstone will be to vindicate the majesty of the law; and they who regard our social wellbeing, who desire to enjoy in peace what they possess, who care for the integrity and dignity of the State, are in duty bound to evince their severe displeasure.

We have heard it suggested that Mr Gladstone is ambitious of displaying an uncontrolled will that he may be as great as Mr Pitt, and that that is why he is ready to forget every discreet consideration for the acquisition of arbitrary power. People who talk in this way can know very little of Mr Pitt, his principles, his situation,

his acts, or the sources of his power. Pitt was known to have the highest regard for the Constitution and laws; he could therefore be safely trusted with the exercise of great power. He was a Minister who, in a time when order and justice were threatened as they are now; when disloyalty to the reigning family and the wish to dismember the State were known to be widely spreading, and when the countenance of a powerful Minister was all that was necessary to make them burst forth and deluge the country in blood; when religion was assailed as it now is, and when a Jacobin rabble was glaring with greedy eyes on the property of the kingdom,—took a prominent part—but what a part! Did he coquet with sedition, and violence, and revolution, and infidelity? Did he even tolerate the evil spirits of his time? No; he placed himself at the head of the party of order, fought the battle of the Constitution, stood up for the empire and its honour, and finally “weathered the storm,” and brought Great Britain triumphantly through. He in no case sacrificed to his own vanity or to petty ambitions. He favoured no faction—he profited by no incitement of class against class, far less did he seek to set the branches of the Legislature at variance to favour his own aims. If the validity of his power were questioned, he could point to the pillars of it in the Sovereign on the throne, and in the three estates of the realm—the Lords spiritual, the Lords temporal, and the Commons—and say, that of each and all he was the trusted and the chosen champion. There is not an approach to parallelism in the cases; and they who desire to say pleasant things to Mr Gladstone had best keep very silent about Mr Pitt, the memory of whose patriotic career must be the very keenest re-

proach to the time-serving, inconsistent politician who is now experimenting with our liberties.

Long immunity, safe passages through many and great dangers, are apt to create a dangerous confidence. We have escaped so many times that we are prone to believe in some natural law prescribing our safety, and to rest supinely under the conviction that "it will all come right." Many who agree as to the correctness of all we say, will nevertheless make but small effort to avert the danger, trusting rather to oft-tried fortune. Such persons we would remind that there can be no sound reliance save in ourselves; that though the stability of our institutions was sufficient to resist former attacks, yet these institutions have been weakened by even victory; that it is the institutions themselves, our passive fortifications, which are now threatened, and that only active defence can save them. Above all, we would impress on all who say "Let be," that in former dangers the Government has been allied with the State against revolution. The present circumstances differ materially from any that have gone before. The coming meeting of Parliament should be regarded as a most momentous occasion. Not only has the nation to demand an account of so many things that have been done; it has to scan narrowly the things that are to be done or proposed. Ministers in their few and feeble winter utterances have been hinting obscurely at repose, and a pause in active legislation. This may possibly be only a blind to cover some signal innovation. But if it be a candid intimation, it is of no value. The choice between action and inaction does not rest with Ministers. If they will not move, their masters will. Can Ministers suppress the agitation for Home Rule, and the storms

which will arise in and out of Parliament by reason of it? Dare they deal decidedly with the Ultramontane party, either by joining hands with or opposing it? and if they dare not do either, how will they guard themselves against attack from that quarter? When Mr Miall shall assail the Church, or when Mr Potter or some less scrupulous member shall demand that the rights of the British workmen as against property shall be considered paramount, how will they maintain the tranquillity for which they would seem to be anxious? Above all, how will they satisfy their *quondam* followers about the American entanglement? That alone, we should think, would murder sleep for the session. The tempers of honourable Radical members will not be sweetened by remembering that they have been induced to discount the Ministerial drafts on their approbation. This notable manœuvre which was to establish Mr Gladstone's reputation as a diplomatist, and convict all that ever went before him of being blunderers and profane brawlers, how will it be regarded, now that its results are beginning to be appreciated? Among the party which Mr Gladstone assumes to lead are many members whose political lives are devoted to saving the public money; there are others, again, whose great aim is, by any and by all means, to preserve peace; and we cannot help hoping against evidence, that some few of his supporters have a regard for the honour of England. It will have more than dawned upon these gentlemen by the time Parliament meets, that no course could have more completely discredited their arguments or baffled their endeavours than that which, in his arrogant imbecility, Mr Gladstone ostentatiously followed. That Irishman who bored into a barrel

of gunpowder with a red-hot poker, thinking to draw forth refreshing whisky, did not commit a greater or more fatal blunder. His eminently conciliatory advances were at once to penetrate to the supposed soft part of the American nature, dissipate all doubt as to our affability and friendliness, conjure up on the instant an overflowing brotherly response, and so the misunderstandings of a century would be healed by one judicious master-stroke. Henceforth the two races would know only the honourable contention as to which should yield most to the other as brethren to brethren. The result was inevitable; it only required that on one side or other there should be sufficient greatness of mind to begin the game of benefits. That greatness of mind was in Mr Gladstone. Glorifying in the abasement, down went that acute queller of human passions into the mire, dragging with him the reputation of his country. We can imagine the silent convulsive laughter which must have stirred the Yankee vitals when this idiotic sacrifice was proposed and accepted. What had been a farce before, a delusion kept up for use in domestic politics, was now made a reality, a terrible engine of offence, and the handle was obligingly placed in American hands. Here was not only voluntary abasement, but an invitation to insult, to defame, and to sue great Britain *à discretion*. Now, though we have not the slightest fear that this country will pay the extortionate demand of America, yet our refusal to pay, or to continue the negotiations, will leave us in regard to the payment in a very much worse position than we were in before the Commission went to Washington; and as to moral results, the amount of obloquy and insult contained in what has been properly termed the American

indictment against Great Britain is so dishonouring, that to have to answer and disprove the charges before the face of Europe is the lowest humiliation. Certainly Mr Gladstone looked for a very different result; but this is only another way of saying that Mr Gladstone did not, and would not, understand the people whom he attempted to soften by courteous and submissive treatment—that he proceeded on theories of his own which are at variance with the teachings of experience—and that he is unfit to be trusted with functions whose exercise demands practical knowledge of mankind. We are far from saying that there is no such thing as a law of kindness, or that there is no power in moderation and courtesy; we admit that it is well to agree with your adversary quickly. But we know, although Mr Gladstone does not, that discrimination is necessary in applying these laws and maxims, and that they are not intended for undistinguishing general use. The same highest authority which prescribes charity and forbearance, cautions also the peaceably disposed against wasting, and worse than wasting, their good offices. There are some creatures before which we are expressly told not to cast our pearls, under a penalty of which Mr Gladstone perhaps at length understands the meaning—“lest they turn again and rend you.” There were many who perceived the extreme indiscretion of sending the Commission to Washington, and who foresaw and foretold the result of it; but these, of course, were overborne by Mr Gladstone and his blind supporters. Now that it is too late to mend the matter, his supporters will probably be no longer blind. They cannot undo the mischief that has been done, but they may take such order that folly of the kind shall not be re-

peated. The President of the Commission, who has been paid in advance for doing his country a grievous injury, should surely have some adjunct to his title, that his descendants and ours may know for what eminent service he was promoted: the addition of the words "of Washington" would effect this; and we wish that some statesman would propose it.

The above are the arguments and observations on this subject which are to be heard daily from reflecting persons of all classes; but as we are disparaging a mode of action which has been plausibly, though erroneously, recommended as being the seed of charity and peace, we will speak briefly of its aspect in the light of international maxims and practice, not trusting to our own knowledge and reasoning, but leaning on an authority of eminence.

There are, in our dispute with America, two qualities which unfit the subject for arbitration. These are, first, the matter; second, the indefinite interest involved.

The matter in dispute—our conduct as a neutral nation during the civil war in America—nearly touches our honour, which ought to be in our own keeping. To allow, not our acts only, but our sentiments and motives, to be examined from different points of view; to answer as culprits for proceedings such as every nation of spirit claims to conduct according to its own sense of fitness; to consent to pay damages, according to the award of arbitrators, for a wrong which was not recognised as a wrong when the circumstances occurred,—so to act must create a loss of self-respect, and a lowering of the respect of other nations. The case is comparable to that of an individual who should allow his life, his limbs, or his liberty—his natural rights—to be the subject of arbitration. It has been

suggested that, if Spain were to demand from us Gibraltar, or if a Continental nation were to interfere with a view of liberating Ireland, as France liberated Italy, we never could or would allow such demand or interference to be dealt with by arbitration, but should stand for our rights, and keep the peninsula and the island as we got them—by the sword.

Secondly, indefinite claims are unsuitable for reference to arbitration. No man and no body of men in the possession of a sound judgment would allow a court of arbitration to be competent to will away the whole, or a very large portion, of his or their worldly possessions to satisfy the demands of a claimant. The magnitude, the vital character, of such unbounded references, would make them in the highest degree inexpedient. It is a different thing when the dispute has been narrowed to within certain limits, when a scale and scope for the award has been prearranged, and when the extreme concession required for the satisfaction of either party has been ascertained. Then, perhaps—it being really of more consequence that the dispute should terminate than by what composition of minor differences it should be terminated—arbitration may be resorted to with good effect. But how remote from this condition was our disagreement with America when we proposed to submit it to arbitration! We had no clear idea—indeed we had not any idea—of what America might think proper to demand, and we had come to no conclusion as to the extent to which we would comply. But in utter ignorance whether the contention would be for millions, or tens of millions, or hundreds of millions, we unwarily placed ourselves, or were placed by our Government, in the hands of a court of arbitration.

It may safely be said that with the knowledge which we now have of the American demands, we should never have referred them. And if this be so, there is proof that the consent to arbitrate before that knowledge was acquired was unwarrantable.

Again, as arbitrators are but human beings, it is desirable that there should be some appeal against their award, in case of either party having reason to doubt the equity or the good faith of it. But what appeal have we, except that which arbitration was intended to obviate? And then it is perplexing that Great Britain, coming into court on the one side as a nation, meets not a nation on the other side, but a number of separate claimants. This is a sacrifice both of dignity and of convenience.

Apart from the international difference, there is a fact which we ought not, and probably shall not wish, to forget. It is an awkward fact, and it is this—namely, that our present Prime Minister, who arranged this arbitration, was among the most premature and injudicious partisans of the American rebels, as they are now called, whom he rashly declared to have become a separate nation. He is thus doubly and trebly bound to see that the country is unharmed by the irritating speeches of its *enfants terribles*; but, as the extrication seems to be as puerile and unfortunate a business as the original error, our case will soon be desperate, unless we place it in trustworthy hands.

We have not mentioned the Budget, nor the probable resistance that will be made to the attack on the Universities, in the list of difficulties that await Ministers; but we have shown that without these there are sufficient clouds in the sky to make it very doubtful whether the session of 1872 may be

a quiet one. It is quite intelligible that after so much misdirected labour the Government may desire tranquillity; but, if that be their aim, they would appear to have effectually shut themselves from it. Those who wish for peace should not scatter dragons' teeth in every direction. We anticipate that the reckoning with the Radical party will be anything but a short, or agreeable, or fraternal operation. And we flatter ourselves, too, that reproaches and recriminations from their followers will not be all the warfare that the Government must prepare for. There are signs that, in this dangerous crisis, the Conservative opposition contemplates an active campaign. Recent speeches of some Opposition leaders seem to indicate that they are arming for battle, and, foremost among these, the oration of Lord Derby at Liverpool is full of promise. This statesman has been so reticent and so dispassionate in time past, he is so little given to make an unmeaning outcry, that when he is outspoken and earnest we may fairly expect his acts to at least second his words. We rejoice to find how alive he is to the magnitude of the dangers which impend, and to the necessity for vigorously providing against them. His appearance at this moment as a Conservative leader is a potent encouragement to the party of order; and it is with pleasure that we recognise the attitude in which he has placed himself, and the views which he has expressed concerning all the troubles which overhang us. We concur with all that he said against the hasty accession of Conservatives to office, and in proof that the business of good citizens just now is to withstand revolution, the dismemberment of the empire, and irreligion. Good work like this may be performed from either side of the House. Indeed we think that, while things

continue in so evil a condition, Ministers should be controlled as much as possible, but by no means relieved of their responsibility. The advice given by Lord Derby on this head is so sound, and indicates so wise a policy, that we should come short of our duty if we did not transcribe it:—

“Let us keep together as a political connection; let us work and wait; let there be no quarrels among ourselves; let there be no apathy on the one hand, and no precipitation on the other,—and, depend upon it, whatever benches we sit upon, we shall not have been without influence on the future history of this country, nor shall we fail to enjoy those opportunities of doing public service which constitute the chief inducement to any honest and rational man to engage in the labours and anxieties of political life.”

But it is probable that the words of Lord Derby will impress a circle far wider than that formed by the Conservative party which he addressed. “Let us keep together as a political connection” should be bound as a frontlet between the eyes of all who value peace and order, of all who dread the punishment which unchecked irreligion and blasphemy may bring upon the nation, of all who would protect their lands and goods from seizure. The marshalling of parties can no longer be according to political theories; the battle will not be between different principles—it will be between principles and no principles. The enemy to be encountered is not a distant enemy, smelt from afar by only the keen-scented, and requiring to be made perceptible to the many by the telescope of argument and proof. He is in the field; he has published his manifesto; he does not need to be sought for; he is too palpable and too near. As in the days when Burke lifted up his voice, and drew the great body of this country to the side of order,

so now should men fling aside puny contentions, and ensigns of minor tenets. It will be time enough to differ about details when we have secured the whole patrimony. *That* is what we have to strike for now; and whatever may be our particular fear, whether we most dread irreligion, or revolution, or the breaking up of the empire, or the alienation of our goods, we should “keep together as a political connection.” It is against the Government which does not govern, but courts only the shouts of the rabble, that our united power should be directed. We must make them feel that to relax the bands of discipline, to palter with the dignity of the State, to promote the unworthy, to “descend into the gutter,” are vital crimes touching the very life of the nation; that good intentions, ignorance, simplicity, are no excuses where the danger is so great; and that the commonwealth is not a subject for empirical experiments. With this end in our view let the battle be joined: if Ministers have nothing to propose, we may perhaps find them occupation; and, once brought to the bar of the country, Mr Gladstone may find that it requires more than “a confident brow” and “the throng of words that come with such more than impudent sauciness from” him, to thrust us “from a level consideration.” The ‘Times,’ as if foreseeing that retribution is at hand, has already, by anticipation, put forth the defence of Ministers—what has been done has been done by Parliament, and is no longer chargeable upon them. This plea supposes that Parliament, having been misled by unsound arguments and specious promises, will be so amiable as to take upon itself all the blame of miscarriage and disappointment. It would be a fair one if Parliament had insisted upon particular measures and left Minis-

ters simply to carry them out in detail; but it will hardly avail when the acts under review are seen to be the invention of the Government, which has pressed them upon Parliament by every available means. The most that can be said as to the complicity of Parliament is, that the Legislature consented to give the vaunted measures a trial, but in so doing by no means relieved the inventors of their responsibility, should the measures be found to have been injudicious. The additional twopence on the income-tax was sanctioned by Parliament, but will the 'Times' say that the Government is quit of blame in respect of it? Moreover, it is to be remembered that Parliament, which is to be made a *particeps criminis*, will be the judge in the case, and may be disposed to resent the attempt to father Mr Gladstone's offences upon it. The 'Times' should remember, too, that *all* Mr Gladstone's measures could not obtain the willing sanction of Parliament. The Army Act was passed in opposition to Parliament, and on the responsibility of the Government. This shows how little Mr Gladstone desires to share with Parliament accountability for his acts, except just when they are likely to bring down punishment. The uncalled-for defence of the 'Times,' therefore, shows us two things: first, that Ministers are apprehensive of being put on their trial; second, that they have no effectual defence to make.

Having written thus far, we paused to read the public utterances of Mr Roebuck and Mr Horsman, anxious to know how two Liberals of loud profession regard the state of affairs. We quite expected to find therein evi-

dence of the direction in which opinion is moving, but were wholly unprepared for the great advance which it has already made. Mr Horsman, always a captious person, was quite safe to find fault with some things; but, lo! in criticising the conduct of the Government, he has so condemned the whole and every part of it, except the Irish policy, that with amaze we find our opinions expressed above to be entirely in accordance with Mr Horsman's opinions. We should observe, too, that Mr Horsman, although he denounced the Government unsparingly, did so "in no unfriendly spirit."* Mr Horsman, therefore, as a friend of the Administration, can find nothing better to say of them than that "they cannot see an inch before their noses;" that "they made use of a course for which Ministers in other days had lost their heads, and monarchs had lost their crowns;" and that "they had shown inexplicable incapacity to understand the feelings of the people." Now, as to the matter of Mr Horsman's strictures, we can only say that his opinions are ours, a little more strongly expressed than we care for; as to the spirit of it we will not trouble ourselves, but leave him to settle on that score with the friends and allies who have driven him to this affectionate protest. But the notes of Mr Horsman are nightingale's notes compared with those of Mr Roebuck. If Mr Horsman chastises the Government with whips, Mr Roebuck chastises them with scorpions,—the kindly double-thonging and the unfriendly venom being invited by deeds which we join in disapproving utterly. The falling away—shall we call it the conversion?—of Mr Roebuck is indeed of deep significance. Here is

* Old Izaak Walton, after giving directions for the impaling of an unhappy frog or lobworm on a fish-hook, adds, "And, in doing this, use him as though you loved him!" There is at least one idea common to "the contemplative man" and Mr Horsman.

a great apostle of Liberalism, one who all his life has wrought and suffered in the democratic cause, who has given his youth and his manhood to the culture of Radicalism, discovering in his old age the real nature of his divinity. Revolution has lifted her veil, like the prophet of Khorassan, and the "love to hatred turned," the furies that have got possession of Mr Roebuck, are for the tragic poet to portray. We cannot deal with the sentiment in this case any more than in that of Mr Horsman; we can only trust that Mr Roebuck will come to a satisfactory arrangement with his conscience concerning his share in the production of the evils which he now denounces with the enthusiasm of one recently enlightened. But it is strictly within our province to note the assent, not extorted, but loud and willing, which the opinions and forebodings expressed often by us are now receiving from men who have hitherto fought against us. The audiences of Mr Roebuck and Mr Horsman seem to have felt exactly as those gentlemen did, and their disposition gives evidence that the country is fast waking up. A little more of this and the question will be, not who shall lead an

attack upon the Government, but who will be left to raise a voice in its behalf.

We may hope, then, that the Ministers' dream of peace will be interpreted in its contrary, according to the proverb. They may be fain to stay their hands, possibly, from doing more mischief immediately; but surely they will be brought to account for the ills that they have already made us suffer. Their arraignment before the country will be a good preparation for the next election. It will be seen in what perilous hands our destinies have been placed, and we shall probably gain much more than a mere temporary deposition of a Government. We shall demonstrate that Mr Gladstone and his Cabinet are incapable of governing the country; and so not only gain relief from present evils, but provide against our peace, our Constitution, and our liberties being experimented with in the future. A year ago we took occasion to say that before long it would be proclaimed from the house-tops that Mr Gladstone is a failure. The events of the interval have shown that we did not speak without reason; and by all the signs observable, the fulfilment of the prophecy is not far off.

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A TRUE REFORMER. — PART I.

CHAPTER I.—THE ENGLISH MAIL.

As we pass along the road of life, some of the most trivial circumstances that have happened to us become printed on our memory, and this apparently quite by chance—at any rate without our being able to account for the reason why we should be able to recollect them so vividly while forgetting so much that is more important. Some passing remark made by a brother or sister as we sat when children talking by the evening fire, years and years ago, or the chance observation of some visitor at the house, neither wise nor witty, these motley records of past life are ticketed off as if by random to be indelibly branded on the memory, while whole years of events are but indistinctly blurred upon it, and the very names and faces of later acquaintances have passed away out of remembrance.

It is not surprising, then, that I have a very vivid recollection of a scene which occurred at the turning-point of my life, although quite without any influence over it, the

event which brought about the change in my fortunes having happened some weeks before.

We were resting, a party of five, under the shade of a clump of acacia-trees in the lowlands bordering the great river, one or two lying at length, the others leaning on their elbows, all smoking, with the air of men who had earned a cigar and the breakfast of which some turbaned servants a few yards off were clearing away the fragments. A little further off some grooms with cloths round their waists for clothing were rubbing down the same number of horses with that hissing accompaniment supposed to be soothing to these animals in all climes, while as many more fresh steeds stood picketed by; the nature of our occupation was further explained by a bundle of spears resting against a tree, and in the background the carcass of a boar, with a cluster of villagers sitting by it, passing a hookah of primitive form round for each to take a pull in turn.

"Yes," said Middleton, adjusting his pith helmet for a pillow, and again assuming a recumbent position, with his hands behind his head to soften the cushion, and his two knees and one muddy jack-boot in the air, "that last pig was game, and so was that pie, and this cup would have been cooler if it had been iced. Blunt, you lazy fellow, you're not half a caterer, to bring us into camp without any ice."

"I never saw such a fellow as Blunt," said Wynne, also recumbent, and with a handkerchief over his face to keep off the flies; "no green peas with the ducks last night, and no ice this morning."

"Too bad," chimed in Howell; "we must reprimand Blunt publicly if this sort of thing occurs again."

"The inefficiency of the commissariat department stands explained," continued Wynne, "when we know that young Blunt is considered rather by way of being an ornament to that branch of the service. Some one ought to write a sensation pamphlet: The Commissariat unveiled, or how Lieutenant Blunt forgot to order any ice."

"There's no pleasing some people," retorted the good-tempered man attacked; "I do all the work, and you do all the grumbling. Perhaps when you've all done talking you'll allow me to explain that I gave a positive order for twenty pounds of ice to be sent out every night with the bread. I daresay the runner has stopped on the way, and is coming up with the tents."

"Very likely, the lazy beggar," said Wynne; "and the ice will arrive just in time to be all melted. And those blessed tents ought to have been up before this. Why, I declare it's nearly nine o'clock, and the hot winds setting in like fury. Pig-sticking may be very good fun, gentlemen, which I don't deny; but

we're in for the hot weather, and no mistake. It strikes me that we ought to bring our brief but glorious campaign to a conclusion. We've done enough for honour. Thirteen pigs in four days is not bad."

"All very well for you to talk, my good sir," said Middleton, "with a six months' campaign in the hills before you; but think of us poor beggars who have to stop behind all the hot weather. I'd rather be out here in a tent any time, hot winds or no, with a good gallop to look forward to every morning, than be stewing all day in a stuffy kutcherry, listening to Ram Buksh & Co. perjuring themselves till they are nearly white in the face. You ought to have your leave stopped for your selfishness."

"You bloated civilians are never satisfied," retorted the other: "do you want to be paid an enormous salary and do nothing for it? Why should you grudge us poor soldiers our hard-earned holiday? Besides, we're of no use if we do stay. Idleness is the root of all evil, my good Middleton; think what a blessing a zealous joint-magistrate is to his country, and you'll find virtue will be its own reward."

"But then there's West here, who has to stop behind also without even being paid for it. Have you no bowels of mercy for him, that you send him back to stable duty and orderly-room before his time?"

"At any rate," broke in Howell, "I hope if we are to stay out much longer in camp that we shan't be kept without our letters all the time. There never was such a forgetful fellow as you are, Blunt, to bring us out into camp and not lay a proper dawd for us."

"Wrong again," said the imperturbable Blunt; "a runner was to start from Sirdhāna last night; and in fact," he added, "if some gentle-

men were blessed with eyes they might see him coming now."

All faces were turned in the direction indicated by Blunt's cigar, where, a few hundred yards off, a man was descried coming at a shambling run along the village path over the plain, a long stick over his shoulder, with a small bundle at the end of it. He was soon in front of our party, and after salaaming, squatted down on his haunches, and, untying his bundle, delivered the contents to the nearest of the recumbent group.

"One 'Englishman,' four 'Pioneers,' lots of letters for those who don't deserve them," said Wynne, to whom the office of sorter had fallen; "and, I do declare, here's the English mail too."

"A dun for you, West," said Howell, passing on a small letter to me, the red wafer on which, almost as large as the envelope, told its own tale. I did not need to open the letter to know that the manager of the Bank of Central India, Limited, begs to inform dear sir that the last monthly instalment on his loan was not yet paid, and that "his faithfully" requested the favour of an early remittance. The missive conveyed almost as accurate information to the rest of the company.

"This looks like another," added Howell, as he handed me a large envelope with a big seal and the English postmark. "Retribution comes fast on your hoary young head, old West."

"West has got the lawyers down on him this time," said Middleton; "at any rate he finds his letter very interesting. But I wish the English papers had come on as well as the letters. I believe Blunt has been in league with that confounded postmaster, who keeps them back on purpose."

"Well, here's a 'Pioneer' 'extra,'" said Wynne, "with a summary of

the news; but there doesn't appear to be much in it. Colonel Pyke has moved for a return of the cost of amalgamating the Indian army, distinguishing the proportion due to each branch of the service, and taking into account the substitution of breeches for overalls, as well as the increased revenue derived from the postage on soldiers' letters. Mr Jawset gives notice that he will move a resolution in the House at an early date for the establishment of representative government in India with equal electoral districts. It is understood that the Secretary of State for India is engaged upon a treatise on differential equations and the quantification of the predicate, which is to appear in monthly parts in the 'Sunday Story-Book.' A pamphlet has appeared which is generally attributed to the leader of the Opposition, to prove the identity of interests between the Conservative party and The International. Mr Merrifield has addressed the electors of Woolwich at a public meeting. In a speech of five and a quarter hours he explained that his sentiments regarding the Irish question have lately undergone some modification, and now announced himself as in favour of a moderate scheme for the introduction of Home Rule into that country. The right honourable gentleman added that it was also open to consideration whether by disbanding our army we might not induce other nations to follow our example of forbearance, and thus inaugurate a system of mutual trust, opening the way for a reign of peace and goodwill on earth. We regret to announce the death of Lieutenant-General Sir Hector Jones, G.C.B., at the advanced age of 86 years. The gallant officer now deceased belonged to the Madras establishment of the East India Company's forces, and bore a distinguished part in many

achievements of that army, including the celebrated march into the Ceded Districts under the Collector of Canara, and the campaign against the Polygars of Madura. Well, this is interesting, but brief. Details in our next, I suppose the old dawdler would say. Hay, old gentleman!"

The old peasant thus appealed to, who had remained hitherto squatting on his haunches just outside our circle, raised his hands before him in the attitude of prayer, and with a deprecating smile muttered a remark in the vernacular to the effect that Captain Wynne was his father and his mother. This interlude reminded our caterer Blunt that the courier had not been paid, so his bearer was summoned from the distance; and the old man, made happy with eighteenpence, or sixpence more than his proper fare, made his salaam to the company, and, shouldering his stick, set off to shamble back over the thirty miles he had just traversed.

The tents, which had come up while we were discussing the papers, were now pitched, the servants had got our dressing-things ready, and the water-carriers stood ready with their sheepskins of water on their shoulders, ready to pour the grateful contents over their masters when divested of their hunting-clothes.

"Now then," said Middleton, "a bath and a nap before it gets too hot to sleep, and let us have the horses ready at five. It's no good thinking of lunch in this roaring hot wind that's getting up, so we shall all be light and fresh for another shy at the pigs this afternoon. So, Blunt, mind you let us have a good dinner, and while we are asleep you might as well cool some soda-water."

I then announced my intention of returning at once to Sirdhāna.

Every one understood that my sudden resolution must be due to the news contained in my English letter, and the announcement was received without comment, but they all protested against my starting off in the middle of the day. "You'll be smothered by the dust, man, not to mention the sun," said Howell, "if you don't wait till the wind goes down. Besides, you can't ride one horse all the way. Send on your fresh horse in the afternoon half-way, and ride mine for the first stage out, and then you can get in to the station well before dark." And this plan seemed too good not to follow.

A day passed during the hot winds in a small tent on the sandy banks of the Ganges is never likely to be of the shortest, but on this day reading and sleep were alike impossible, nor could I even sit still; and as a room ten feet square hardly admits of walking, I was obliged to seek the best shelter I could in the plain outside, and pace up and down restlessly through the long hours. But even the longest day must come to an end; and at five o'clock, when the horses were saddled for the evening's sport, I too mounted for my ride to cantonments.

"I did not like to disturb you," said Wynne, who, although he shared my tent, passed the day in Blunt's, "but I saw that name in the list of deaths in the English summary, and thought you might like to be alone. I hope it's not a very near relative, old fellow; but you seemed a good deal cut up about it."

Had I then been acting like a hypocrite? for assuredly grief was not among the emotions which possessed me. It *was* a near relation, I replied, but we had not been intimate. It was not this had startled

me so much as other news received by letter, which took me away. The fact was, if the news now received was confirmed by subsequent mails, it would appear that I should benefit very largely by the death of this relation. Would he take an opportunity of mentioning this to the rest of the party, asking them not to let it go farther at present, as I did not know how far the news was authentic? And wishing them all good-bye and good sport, I rode off, Howell, who was a wag in a mild way, and fond of quoting Pickwick, shouting out from a distance and stopping me, as I cantered away, to give his love to Tuppy. Except Blunt, I never saw any of them again. Middleton sleeps in an Indian cemetery; Wynne was killed two years later in a skirmish on the frontier; Howell was a passenger in a steamer which left Calcutta for Rangoon the day before the great cyclone,

and was never heard of afterwards. It would take even a greater change of life or fortunes than befell me to efface the sense of loss their deaths have caused. For although our intimacy was brought about more by the chance which throws people together for a brief season in that land of change and movement, than by any special affinity of taste, who could help growing to like such men as these, so brave, so generous, so light-hearted, two of them at least so clever? Theirs, too, was the really engaging age, when the selfishness and conceit of youth have worn off, and before we get to be crusted over with the hardness and cynicism of middle age. And, alas! as we grow older, the capacity for forming new friendships no longer remains with us. We cannot, even if we would, fill up the ever-increasing gaps time makes in the ranks of those we have learned to love.

CHAPTER II.—OPENS UP A NEW SCHEME OF LIFE.

The contents of the English letter had indeed been sufficient to startle and excite; and as I had plenty of leisure to read it over and over again, both during that day and afterwards, I can even now give its contents *verbatim* from memory. It ran as follows:—

“GRACECHURCH STREET, E.C.,
“*March 18th.*

“DEAR SIR,—We write to apprise you that your uncle, Mr James West, of Old Broad Street, and The Retreat, Twickenham, died at the latter place on Tuesday last the 15th instant, of bronchitis. By his last will, dated the 20th November, Mr West bequeathed the whole of his property, after payment of certain legacies, to you, his only surviv-

ing nephew—appointing his friend, our Mr Paterson, executor to the estate. Mr Paterson will accordingly proceed to take out a probate in due course, as well as to take the other measures necessary under the circumstances; but as he will have to obtain your early instructions on various points, we think it is extremely desirable that you should return home as quickly as possible. We beg to add that, in case you should be in immediate want of funds, we have instructed the Asiatic Bank to authorise their Calcutta branch to honour your drafts to the extent of five hundred (£500) pounds.

“We write in haste by the first outgoing mail. Mr Paterson will communicate further particulars in

due course, and we will therefore merely add that your late uncle's property consists principally of house property near Twickenham, and railway and miscellaneous stock, producing a present income of about three thousand (£3500) five hundred pounds per annum.

"Awaiting your further commands, we are, dear sir, your faithful and obedient servants,

"PATERSON, HERRIES, & CROUCH.

"To Captain CHARLES WEST,
Royal Horse Artillery,
Sirdhāna, East Indies."

A suspicion that the letter might be a hoax was refuted by the genuine appearance of the English postmark, still more by the fact that none of my present acquaintance were aware of my having an uncle, whose existence indeed had almost escaped my recollection for many years. My father and he had had some serious difference which kept them apart, and after my father's death the breach extended to my poor mother. I remember to have seen my uncle only once, when he invited me down to Twickenham once for a couple of days when I was at school, but apparently I did not take his fancy, for he never renewed the invitation, and the only notice he ever after took of me was to send my mother a hundred guineas for my outfit when I got my commission, with a cold letter that discouraged any advances on our part. I had heard nothing more of him until now. But any doubt remaining on the subject was finally set at rest by a telegram from the Asiatic Bank the following day, in reply to one despatched on my arrival at Meerut, which announced that the five thousand and odd rupees, the equivalent of £500, were actually at my disposal.

A thirty-mile ride was needed to cool down my brain after the excite-

ment created by this news; but even this exercise, and the succeeding bath and dinner, did not suffice for the purpose. The cantonment air seemed stuffy compared with that of the open plain by the river, and my little bungalow was hot and close after sleeping in a tent awning, and I lay tossing about all night revolving in my mind this strange turn of fortune. It was not that I cared for money more than other men, and few soldiers were more devoted to their profession; it was not the money to spend, but what it freed me from, and the possibilities it opened up to view, that filled my brain with excitement, and made swallowing difficult. The youngest of the second captains in the regiment posted to the horse artillery, and just now in temporary command of a crack battery, my lot must have appeared a thoroughly enviable one to every youngster in the regiment; and although I had nothing but my pay, most of my brother officers were in the same case, and Indian horse-artillery allowances suffice with prudence and good management for all ordinary wants. But then, as happened with so many others, the whole of this income was not available. A couple of chargers bought, a new outfit on joining my battery, an illness which drove me on six months' leave to the hills the previous year, and I found myself five thousand rupees in debt, which, to get rid of the worry of numerous duns, I had paid off in the usual fashion by a loan from a local bank, that existed mainly by lending money to officers on slight security and high interest. Twelve per cent for the loan, and six per cent for an assurance on double the amount, made an annual charge of nearly a thousand rupees a-year; and while the bond specified, according to the

usual formula, that the loan was to be repaid in three years by monthly instalments, the equally common result came about, that I was paying eighty rupees a-month, the utmost I could spare out of my pay, and that with difficulty, while the capital debt remained undiminished, and was likely to continue so. The only chance of ever clearing it off appeared to be by leaving my regiment and obtaining some appointment which would admit of reduced present expenditure, with the prospect of eventually rising to a higher income than could be earned in the artillery—in other words, to give up my profession, for an Indian Staff Corps officer employed as a magistrate, or on the canals, or in the pay department, is a soldier merely in name. But even this move would not bring all the relief I sought. The visit to Sirmoori last year had wrought the change which comes over every man at some time of his life. Soldiering, study, or sport, the things which had before made the business of life, were now hardly distractions. Behind all remained the one unsatisfied longing, the dream always present of happiness that could not be mine. Genteel poverty is well enough for a bachelor, but I had seen enough of its effect on married life in India to know what in this predicament was my real duty. My resolve might be put down to cold-blooded prudence, but it would be really a bad form of selfishness to take advantage of the unreflecting impulse to self-sacrifice which so often actuates a woman, and to condemn the one I loved to poverty in the tropics. From the first day of marriage the difficulty makes itself felt; and even if love is strong enough to conquer the daily and hourly struggles and calls for self-denial when two people have to

live on what is only meant for one, no love can stave off the inevitable loss of refinement which must take place if the family grows larger while the little purse stands still. There are degrees in these things; but a captain's wife in a marching regiment with a large family can no more remain what she was, than can Polly Jones the pretty little gunner's wife, who has to sleep in the same barrack-room with a couple of dozen soldiers, and merely a bit of curtain round her bed. Some people, happily for them, have no imagination; but I could not help looking forward into the future; and old Tony Dawson, one of our senior captains, who commanded a field-battery at Sirdhāna, always appeared to me typical of what my fate might be if I plunged into matrimony on four hundred rupees a-month. Everybody said Dawson had been a capital soldier in his day, and he was a good soldier now; but he could hardly be said to belong to the regiment. He certainly "took it out" of the mess as much as he could without running up a bill there, being obliged to subscribe to it; but he had never been known to dine there, and he was obliged to get off all subscriptions, even that for the annual Christmas treat to the soldiers' children. Then he drove his charger in his old buggy, a venerable beast, which the inspector of artillery, if he had done his duty, would have condemned long ago as unfit for even a field-battery; and the poor old fellow had not taken a day's leave for ten years. His income was not such a bad one now that he commanded a battery, and his promotion was due in a few years; but he had got into debt early in life and had been "in the banks" ever since. But his case was nothing to that of his wife. Mrs Dawson had been the belle of Calcutta, it was said, before she

married, and she would have looked a handsome woman even now if she had ever been decently dressed ; and rumour had it that she had been a fine player and singer—although, as she had never had the chance of touching a piano for many years, there were no means of verifying this ancient tradition ; but the stray visitors who had penetrated to the interior of Dawson's bungalow had never seen her otherwise than in a dirty-looking wrapper, her rather full figure apparently devoid of any physical support in the way of stays, and with her thick black hair tied up in a knot at the back of her head. The said bungalow swarmed with children, the eldest a long-legged hobbledohoy who had been brought up at a school in the hills, and was now hanging about Sirdhāna waiting for some chance appointment in the uncovenanted service which should involve no examination, competitive or otherwise ; then came a girl said to be only fifteen, but who looked liked a woman, whom her father occasionally of an evening took for a drive on the mall in the old buggy, and who, it was generally supposed, could not write her own name ; after her followed an indefinite number of boys and girls, who might be seen any morning by the passer-by playing about the desolate strip of gravel round the house which had once been a flower-garden, half-dressed, chattering in Hindustani, and attended by a sweeper-looking fellow with a dirty skull-cap on his head, who did duty for child's bearer. Poor old Dawson ! the only happy time he ever seemed to have was when his battery marched on relief from one station to another. He then joined the camp mess and lived like a bachelor, sending his family on by dawk, and was said to be quite a different man during his short respite from do-

mestic cares, taking his glass of gin-and-water after dinner, and chatting about the days of Aliwal and Chilianwallah, where he had served as a smart subaltern in the horse artillery.

Everybody, it is true, need not be overrun by children and debt as was this grey-headed old captain ; but such was the ideal towards which it seemed to me marriage and debt always more or less tended, and I would not drag down the girl I loved in this fashion even should she be ready to make the sacrifice. True, there was the possibility of civil employment : every man in India could get the appointment he wanted if he only took trouble enough, and I was what little Jones, one of our battery subalterns, used to call a "dab" at the language ; but even then one must begin on a small salary and wait. It would take me three or four years merely to get out of debt ; and even if the parents would agree, could I in fairness ask a young girl to wait that time wearing out her first freshness for such an uncertain future ? And then to have all the affair discussed circumstantially at every dinner-table in Sirmoori, and to be ticketed off as a sort of artillery Jacob, on probation for four or five years, while my Rachel would be reminded every hour by Laban how foolish she was to throw herself away in a long engagement with such a poor match for the climax. And then the professional sacrifice ! A captain of horse artillery without encumbrances is a man of some consideration : an assistant commissioner or junior commissariat officer is a very different sort of personage, especially if he enters a department late in life as junior to much younger men.

Such thoughts as these had occupied many an hour at Sirmoori in the previous summer. More than

once, when under the sweet spell of Eva's presence, was I tempted to throw prudence aside: at such moments it seemed as if all calculation were but selfish meanness, and that love was the only thing worth living for; but with separation came back the whisperings of caution, and in the solitude of one still starlight night, after a meeting where she seemed more charming and winning than ever, and I was vain enough to think I had only to say one word to be sure of this sweet prize, the resolution was formed, as I looked from the balcony of my room over the mountain-slopes to the nook where nestled the cottage that made her home, to carry self-denial into love. But now all was possible. Love and marriage, without sacrifice or remorse, and what is more, a vision of a future, what hitherto had seemed an idle dream, began now to take a tangible shape.

It was not a difficult matter to obtain a month's leave, for although the notion of a man going to the hills on "urgent private affairs" was ordinarily regarded as a joke, the fact that a needy second captain was ready to renounce such a piece of luck as the command of his battery for six months was sufficient evidence of his being in earnest. The colonel and brigadier were both propitious; and making over charge to the senior subaltern, who, never having been in command of the battery before, was quite unable by his profession of regrets at losing my company to conceal the pleasure he felt, I started off by the night train. For a wonder there was no breakdown on the line that night, and I reached the foot of the mountains by breakfast-time next morning. It being early in the season, the stage ponies over which the next forty miles had to be traversed still

possessed four legs apiece, and the vestiges of saddles and bridles; and without exhibiting extreme cruelty I managed to climb the last great hillside soon after sunset, and to excite the poor beast I bestrode into what did duty for a canter along the wooded crest of the mountain; and, passing in the twilight through the main road of the sanitarium and various groups of residents returning from their evening walks and rides, found myself sitting down in boots and breeches at the eight o'clock club dinner.

There was to be a ball that night, given by the residents of Sirmoori to the wife of the Lord High Commissioner, to which of course everybody was going. I could not go from want of an invitation, and because, moreover, the porters had not arrived with my baggage. For the same reason I could not go to bed, for the furniture of the club-rooms did not include bedding; and while awaiting the arrival of my own, I joined a party of old stagers who preferred whist to dancing. They were men who were ready to go on playing for ever, and my taste for the moment fitted in with theirs, for I was still too excited to want sleep. Thus we all played on till the early morning, when the ball-goers began to return, some to call for a "peg," others declaring that they were quite fresh and ready to cut in for a hand before going to bed.

Some three or four fell to smoking in easy-chairs in the balcony, discussing jerkily between puffs of tobacco the events of the evening. It was the best ball of the season; the best of any season; the Marchioness was evidently pleased with her reception. There were more pretty girls than usual at Sirmoori.

"Yes," said some one, "and the divine Eva looked more beautiful

than ever. In my humble opinion, the spins of last year cut out the new importations hollow."

"Yes; and did you see the expression of old Brooke's face when she danced with him? There was a sickly grin of self-satisfaction on it which was positively awful. We shall see him dancing round dances soon if he meets with so much encouragement."

"That's not a 'case,' depend on it," said the first speaker; "there are limits beyond which no woman can sell herself."

"Limits not reached there, my dear boy, so far as mamma is concerned. I thought she looked particularly pleased last night, and the young lady herself did not appear very unhappy. She responded very affably to old Brooke's grins."

"Oh," rejoined the other, "that's merely her good-nature; she looks sweet all round. Like her mother, she has a kind word for everybody."

Now, Sir William Brooke was the governor of a province upon leave at Sirmoori; a man with a good private fortune, and a salary of ever so many thousand rupees a-month. Moreover, he was only about ten years older than myself, and had not more than half-a-dozen children. But these encumbrances were at home and out of sight, and he was to all intents and purposes a bachelor, at any rate until his eldest daughter should be grown up and come out to him; meanwhile he was a confirmed flirt, always dangle after some pretty girl, and giving sumptuous archery and croquet parties, with splendid prizes of jewellery to be shot or played for; but whether he never meant to do more than flirt, or whether it was that even a governor's salary, with the conditions attached to it, was not sufficiently attractive, certain it was that, although year after year he found some excuse for coming up to

Sirmoori—now a proposal for a tax on bangles, now a scheme for a new mode of Hindustani pronunciation, to be discussed with the Lord High Commissioner—the croquet-parties and the prize-giving went on, and he still remained a bachelor, or rather a widower.

Yet this loose talk was quite enough to disconcert me. It was broad daylight when I got to my room, and the peaks of the hills were lighted up with the rosy hues of coming day, as I looked from the balcony over to the mountain-side opposite, dotted with pine-roofed cottages peeping out among the trees. It was on such a morning that I quitted the sanitarium last autumn, armed with self-denial, leaving hope behind me. Now everything seemed possible. But the conversation just repeated was tingling in my ears, and came to throw its horrid doubts over the future—I might be too late.

My luggage had arrived during the night, and my old bearer had unpacked my things and made my bed, and now lay coiled up in his blanket on the floor of the balcony, sleeping the sleep of the just man who has walked forty miles over the mountains. I tried for some time to follow his example; but, notwithstanding two almost sleepless nights before, and the ride and the whist, sleep was still hard to woo; turn which way I might, the image of Sir William pulling the long points of his mustaches and grinning over the croquet-balls rose before me, with a bevy of young ladies playing for a bracelet, and one face surpassing all. "She smiled sweetly at him," said the club gossips. I fancied her smiling now, sweetly of course; she could not look otherwise. What if my change of fortune came too late? Well, there still remained the other dream to

realise. Thus passed the hours, bringing their torture of doubts; it is needless to detail them; every lover can understand what I under-

went without description. At last nature came to the rescue, and I fell asleep.

CHAPTER III.—I TRY MY LUCK AT AN OLD GAME.

It was nearly two o'clock when I awoke, and the Marchioness of Kilarney's garden-party at Vallombrosa was to take place at four: there was little more than sufficient time to obtain the needful invitation, through a note despatched to a friendly equerry-in-waiting, and to dress, breakfast, and set off on a hired pony to the place of meeting.

The little glen which had been dubbed with the name of Vallombrosa by the English residents at the sanitarium, was one of the few valleys to be met with in the Himalaya, and lay several hundred feet below the crest of the ridge, almost hidden in its setting of lofty cedars with which the mountain-sides were clothed. At the bottom were a few acres of what by comparison might almost be called level ground, occupied by a straggling jungle dignified by the title of botanical garden, and a piece of green turf available for cricket and lawn games, the whole surrounded by a gravel path which did duty for a race-course, with a hill in one part, suggestive of the further end of Epsom below the starting-point as seen under the influence of nightmare. Here, where the wooded heights gave a sunset at two o'clock, a broad strip of shade, the Indian luxury, was already spread across the turf, and under its grateful shelter were scattered groups of visitors engaged in the various strife of archery, bowls, and croquet, or looking on at the players. The whole panorama, viewed as the visitor descended from the mountain-path above it, formed as pretty

a picture as could well be conceived, the fresh summer dresses of the ladies on the green lawn, set off by the scarlet tunics of the attendants serving refreshments, with the noble forest background of the mountain-side. But this was not what occupied my thoughts at the time. First paying my respects to the Marchioness, I passed on, exchanging greetings with acquaintances scattered over the grounds, in search of the one person I had come to see. There is Mrs Barton talking to the Lord High Commissioner; and I stepped up to speak to them. His lordship greeted me in his usual genial fashion, and the lady was polite, and even kindly, as was her fashion, although I thought she gave a little start which was hardly of surprise; but the presence of the Lord High Commissioner was a sufficient excuse for passing on, and I hurried away after shaking hands. Ah! there she is; only one woman in the world could walk with that grace. The arrows had been fired, and the fair archers were moving across to the targets, a dozen of them, perhaps, with as many men, and a sprinkling of other ladies, and among them a young girl who moved like a queen. An escort of gentlemen accompanied her, of whom one was Brooke, carrying the quiver. Does she smile sweetly on him, as those young rascals said? Yes, there can be no doubt of that; but the other dangles seem to come off just as well. Eva could not frown at anybody.

"Now then, Miss Barton, this is

the critical point; you know you were allowed fifty points in consideration of your—ahem—your youth and inexperience, so you've only to hit the target once to win."

"Oh, Sir William Brooke, it's no use giving advice, for I haven't the strength of a mouse; it's quite impossible to shoot these long distances; at Toghlukabad they always allow me to stand half-way up to the target."

"Ah! Miss Barton, we are horribly strict up here, and I'm afraid we couldn't break through the rules to that extent even for you. Do you know I really wish we could, though."

So much I heard, and then joined the party. What means that little start, and that blush? Pleasure? or shame at detection? At any rate this evening shall solve the problem.

First greetings over, I fell back among the spectators, and the shooting went on. There were civil nothings to be said all round, for to arrive at the hills as May begins is fair matter of congratulation, and even from Sirdhána the traveller brings some news. But, looking on between the intervals of talking, it was easy to see that Miss Barton's depreciation of her shooting powers was not exaggerated, at any rate on the present occasion. Her little hands seemed hardly able to hold the bow, and the arrows went in any direction but the right one, and scarce half-way across the course. Even Brooke found it difficult to pay appropriate compliments.

But the longest party that ever took place must have an end; already a string of returning visitors was dotting the path up the mountain-side, ladies in their sedans, gentlemen on horseback; and the particular group whose proceedings I was watching began to prepare for

departure. At this moment I discovered that my pony and its attendant were missing, and I had to search for some time through the garden before finding them, when all the party had started. It was easy to overtake them, however; the bearers could not carry their fair burdens very fast up that steep path, and the exigencies of limited width involved considerable straggling and slackening of speed of those in rear. One person after another was soon passed: a solitary horseman enjoying his evening cigar; a couple of ladies in confidential chat, their chairs side by side; groups of twos and threes were overtaken in turn, when, before the object of my search was reached, I beheld at a turn in the path just in front of me a blaze of red. It was the scarlet liveries of the Lord High Commissioner's runners, four of them carrying the Marchioness, while half-a-dozen more, headed by a big fellow with a mace, surrounded the chair. Here was a difficulty. Etiquette forbade my riding past, and these scoundrels in red blocked up the path, and prevented my riding up alongside to her chair. This post was occupied by a stout member of Senate, who preferred his own legs to those of a pony in the neighbourhood of these precipices. He was holding on to the side of the chair, and his part of the conversation seemed to be carried on with difficulty in consequence of the pace; and indeed four miles an hour at a gradient of one in seven will try the wind of most stout middle-aged gentlemen. A sharp turn in the path brought me into view of her ladyship as I rode behind, and a salutation was the signal for riding up and occupying the other side of the sedan. Scarcely a minute had passed before the conversation led up to an opportunity. What a pretty bracelet that was Sir William

Brooke gave as his prize, said the Marchioness. She wondered if he had ordered it from home or had got it at the jeweller's here. She wanted to ask him.

"He's just in front, your ladyship; I'll send him back to you to answer the question," I cried; and without waiting for any response I rammed my spurs into the old pony, and pushed through the red attendants. Almost the next sedan I overtook, not fifty yards in advance, was that I was in search of, and riding beside it, sure enough, was Brooke. I pushed up to the other side.

Now just at this spot there was room for the two horses as well as the sedan; but immediately ahead the path narrowed; and as Brooke, like a sensible fellow, had taken the inside, I should either have to give way or run a good chance of going over the precipice. There was no time to be lost. "Sir William," I said, "the Marchioness wants particularly to speak to you; she's just behind:" and Sir William, unsuspecting of my treachery, made a temporary adieu, and, reining up, turned his pony round and moved down the path again. Now then came my chance, and there was not a moment to spare. Already half the hill was accomplished. A short way ahead was a cluster of riders and sedans, in one of which I thought I could distinguish even in the dusky twilight Mrs Barton's pretty bonnet, while the red men with their burdens must be coming up hand over hand. Every moment was precious. Yet the situation was not favourable for a love-scene. The sedans affected by the ladies of Sirmoori are like a lounging-chair suspended on the centre of a pair of shafts which are carried by four men. These simple rustics understand not a word of English, but the language of love is not always

spoken; and a lover might well desire some other conditions for a declaration. Why then not wait? Was it that I feared for myself lest presence might weaken the impression absence had formed on her imagination? or did some inward whispering of conscience say that fancy was leading where reason could not follow? If this young heart could really be mine for the asking, would it be for the happiness of both to take the gift? Was it in my nature to make this gentle, simple girl really happy? Some such uneasy questionings passed through my mind, but I was too reckless, too selfish if you will, to listen to them. One look at that sweet face was enough to banish prudence. Another moment and the die was cast.

A minute passed in silence, broken only by the low grunting of the bearers as they shuffled along with their burden. Then Eva spoke first:—My coming up to the hills was unexpected, surely. She had heard that I intended to stay down in the plains this season. This in a low voice, and looking straight before her.

"So I did," I replied, "but I could not keep to my resolution. And you must know why I have come. Because I could not stay away from you."

No answer followed, and, for a few seconds, bearers and all, we moved on in silence.

One little hand rested on the shaft of the sedan—the left hand, the one nearest me. Stooping down, I placed my own on it, and it was not withdrawn.

"Look at me, Eva!" I said, "and let me see that I am the happiest man alive."

Then Eva looked round, blushing, with half-averted face and downcast eyes, and the slender fingers gave

an answer to my question. I dared not raise them to my lips, strong though the temptation was to forget our company.

A few moments more, as it seemed, brought us to the top of the hill, where our path joined the main road, and there was room for a large party to keep together; and here Mrs Barton was waiting for Eva to join her; but this was not before Lady Killarney and Brooke had overtaken us. What explanations had passed regarding my message I know not, but I thought her ladyship looked slyly at us as she came up. Brooke showed no signs of vexation; he was always on too good terms with himself to be put out at anything. "Good evening, Miss Barton," he said, as we came to the point where the road to his house turned off. "We've had a delightful evening, I'm sure; I only hope that next time you'll be more successful. Upon my word, you really only want practice to shoot very well, I assure you."

"You'll come the first thing to-morrow, won't you?" whispered Eva, as we reached the point where the path led up to her mother's house. "Mamma will be dreadfully angry, I know; you must come and speak to her first." And with this understanding, I rode off to the club.

Strangely enough, there was not even a carpet dance that evening at Sirmoori, and after dinner the card-room was filled with whist-players. Contrary to my usual habit, I joined one of the tables where high points were in force, and cut in for a game, the other players being an old colonel of a line regiment who lived on his whist, an assistant-surgeon

who intended to do the same but had so far not succeeded, and two youngsters spending their first season in the hills, one of whom promised to be a fine player by-and-by, the other hopelessly bad. But I was in luck on this evening: whichever way we cut my partner and I always won; and by midnight the colonel had come out quits, the assistant-surgeon had gone to bed, the night being evidently unpropitious for his fortunes, leaving an I O U for about a month's pay behind him in my pocket; the other two between them owed me about seventy pounds. The poor lads hid their chagrin under good-natured congratulations at my success, naturally thinking the gain was of as much consequence to me as the loss was to them; while I went off to bed, puzzled to think how, without giving offence, I might let them off a debt they certainly had not the present means of paying. Now that the matter was of little personal consequence, I was struck as I had never been before with the folly of the custom which permits these high stakes, so far beyond the means of the players, and this prostitution of a noble game to mere gambling. The amount of the points does not matter, say some men, because at whist luck is equalised in the long-run. But then this long-run sometimes takes ten or fifteen years to accomplish, and everybody cannot afford to wait so long. At any rate, my short run, and the lugubrious hilarity of the youngsters who had contributed to it, made such an impression on me that I have never played for money since.

CHAPTER IV.—DIPLOMATIC.

Next morning at half-past ten I rode up the path which led to Mrs Barton's cottage. Her drawing-room would certainly be crowded with visitors from eleven till two, some of whom would be sure to stay for lunch and remain pottering about all the afternoon; so my only chance of securing a few words alone lay in coming early. In a few minutes she entered the room.

"Good morning, Captain West," she said; "this is very kind of you to come so soon to see us." But it was easy to infer from her voice that my early visit was not particularly agreeable, while I thought I could detect a sort of good-natured pity mingled with apprehension, as much as to say that she saw through my little game, and that it was no good trying it on.

There was no time to be lost, for another visitor might arrive at any moment. "Mrs Barton," I said, "I have come so early because I have something important to say. Last night I proposed to your daughter, and she accepted me."

The announcement evidently took the good lady by surprise. That she had suspected me as a possible lover was evident, but I don't think I was regarded as a dangerous one, perhaps because of my long face and nose, and because I never danced. That I should have gone to the length of making an offer, and a successful one—this revelation evidently came like a shock. She sank down on the sofa behind her trembling and speechless, looking mutely in my face.

I knew what was coming; the simple stock phrases that would be used as soon as the power of words returned; and it would save time to anticipate objections no longer ap-

plicable. I therefore added abruptly that I had another communication to make. Private business of a rather pressing nature required my presence in England, and therefore I had further to ask that an early day might be fixed for the wedding, so that we might start off homewards as soon as I could obtain furlough.

This announcement had just the effect I desired. Taking furlough signifies, for a married man, the possession of at least three or four hundred pounds in hard cash. I could perceive that my position was accordingly at once shifted in the good lady's estimation out of the category of complete ineligibles. To talk about starting on furlough in this confident manner was almost the next thing to laying down a bag of money on the floor as evidence of financial respectability, for such affairs as specific settlements had never come within her experience. Still I could see traces of incredulity lingering in her face. How as to the rumours of my being "in the banks"? Had not Morison, who was one of the directors of the Central India, told her that I had borrowed five thousand rupees from it only last year, to get away from Sirmoori, Roberts and Williamson of my regiment going security, and that Williamson had simultaneously raised the same amount from the Great Mogul Bank on the joint security of Roberts and myself? Had she not heard these accounts from the most authentic of gossips? yet, if I was not a thorough impostor, they must be untrue.

Such questions as these I could read in the conflict of doubt displayed on Mrs Barton's face, as she sat opposite to me, trying to gain

time with unmeaning nothings for making up her mind.

Just then was heard the clatter of a horse's hoofs coming up the pathway. If another visitor entered just now, the battle would have to be fought over again from the beginning. I stepped toward the door, and calling for a servant was answered by the domestic tailor, who was sitting in the verandah employed upon a ball-dress for Eva, holding one end of the skirt down to the floor between his toes while he stitched away at the other. I told him to say the door "was closed," which vernacular message—the Indian equivalent for our more euphemistic "not at home"—he communicated to the visitor, and shortly returned with his card, while the sound of the retiring horse soon died away in the distance.

Mrs Barton remained sitting on the sofa while this interlude was enacted: my move was so sudden that she had not time to stop it, and the battle was now as good as won. There remained merely the commonplace objections to be raised—Eva's youth, the suddenness of the affair, and so forth. No girl, she said, ought to be married till she was nineteen. Now, as Emma had been married before she was eighteen, and Sophy only a month or two after she reached this age, I had no misgiving on that score; and as our conversation went on it was evident that my future mamma-in-law was divided between the desire to indulge in the most interesting of gossip, and to plunge into the excitement of another wedding, and the fear lest, in her good-nature and too easy trustfulness, she should be doing badly for her daughter. Such anxiety was reasonable, for Sophy and her husband had a regular struggle to live; and if Mary had done well in marrying a chief-

court judge, and Emma a well-to-do civil engineer, and Fanny a civilian well up in the civil service, there was poor Harriet, whose husband, although also in the civil service and a full collector, had turned out to be deeply in debt, and was such a screw that he would not let her come up to the hills, or even allow her a decent carriage. Two of the prettiest girls that ever came to India had thus been literally thrown away from want of caution; it was only natural she should be careful now.

At last a hint rather more strongly expressed than what had gone before gave me the opportunity of playing my last card. "Then, Captain West," she said, "you know one has to think of the expense of marriage, so that I really hardly know what to say."

"Exactly so," I replied. "I know how much expense you and Mr Barton have been put to in this way, and therefore I should take it as a particular favour if he would allow me to defray, or at any rate to advance, whatever amount might be needed for this occasion."

I had quite misunderstood her, she answered—as indeed I had pretended to; she referred to the cost of married housekeeping for young couples: besides, Joe would never hear of such a thing as any one else paying for his daughter's wedding outfit. This I knew perfectly well, but my bolt had hit the mark. I could see that the easy way in which I had proposed my account should be drawn upon had removed any lingering doubt as to the authenticity of the gossip about my bank debts. Finally Mrs Barton got out of her dilemma by a compromise, which in fact assured my victory. "Well, Captain West," she said at last, looking up smiling through her tears as I stood before her, "I really

hardly know what to say. Eva is so young, and the whole thing is so sudden; and although I don't want to say anything against the Artillery, which I know is a very fine service, and your character stands so high that I am sure my dear girl will be quite safe with you; at any rate I must ask her father's consent. It would not be proper, as you must see, to let my girl engage herself without her father's approval. So if I bring Eva to you, you will understand it is not to be a regular engagement, won't you?" So saying, and giving me a still very pretty hand, smiling in deprecating fashion, and wiping her eyes, and repeating this caution, Mrs Barton got up and left the room, to return presently followed by the prettiest girl in the world, and never looking prettier than in this robe of blushes, the timid downcast eyes beneath the gentle brow and soft brown wavy hair.

That three persons make no company was never better exemplified than on this occasion. In her mamma's presence Eva was shy and I felt awkward, while Mrs Barton was at best somewhat incoherent in attempts to explain her definitions of a "regular engagement." She soon withdrew, however, to go through the form of consulting "Joe," an operation which fortunately lasted till lunch-time, and gave Eva the opportunity of overcoming the first shyness which every woman must feel on first meeting an affianced lover who is yet almost a stranger to her. What made my darling take a fancy to my long melancholy face I cannot tell, and I think she was still half frightened at me; but by the time our *tête-à-tête* was interrupted we were on better terms. And then was seen the first intimation of the confidential footing my reception had assumed; for at lunch-

eon bitter beer replaced the light wines which had appeared on the previous occasions of my lunching here. I had never seen Eva drink beer before, but we all preferred it to anything else. It was a very cosy meal. Eva said little, but her mamma was a good talker, and possessed the true politeness of amiability, a desire to please. Besides, here was a new-comer who had only just arrived, and had heard none of the Sirmoori gossip. I think this alone would have reconciled Mrs Barton to the engagement; so good a listener was not to be found in the place, and now I should be available at all hours as a recipient of her confidences.

At four o'clock I had to go away and write letters for the post; it was agreed, too, that, under present circumstances, it would be properer to meet as mere ordinary acquaintances in the evening than to set out together for our walk. Accordingly we met again on the road which winds round the crest of the mountain, and is dignified by the title of The Mall. Here, instead of walking separately with Eva, I walked between the two sedans, at any rate in the beginning. Eventually Mrs Barton dropped behind to chat with another lady, and Eva and I pushed on ahead, and of course were joined by half-a-dozen dangles, the Mall being very crowded at this season. People, however, for the most part, looked askance at us, and at night a friend at the club took the liberty of hinting the cause. Sundry visitors calling at Rhododendron Lodge during the day having found the "door closed," and my pony standing before the house,—the brute being a white-nosed piebald with an evil eye, and in constant requisition at the club,—was unmistakable: there could, he hinted, be only one inference.

But the next day was decisive. On the previous evening Mrs Barton and Eva were engaged to dine out; and the following day I had to attend a levee, and various cross engagements kept us apart till the evening, when I joined them again for their promenade, and managed to lag behind with Eva; and this time everybody avoided us as if we had the plague. There could be no mistake about the meaning of this. We were clearly marked off as an engaged couple, and all Mrs Barton's precautions and injunctions had come to nought. I put this down at first to the piebald pony, but wondered that even Sirmoori gossip should travel so fast; it soon came out, however, that there was a simpler explanation. I might have known, indeed, that the keeping such a secret was quite beyond Mrs Barton's powers. A secret with her was apparently only valuable as giving you priority of news: what was the good of having something to tell, if you are not to tell it? Hence it was that the residents at Toghlukabad, where the family passed the cold season, Mr Barton being the commissioner of that important place, were almost as well acquainted with "Joe's" little weaknesses as the wife of his bosom; the difficulty of getting him to remit money home for the children's schooling; how Mary, from this cause, came out a year later than was intended, after her outfit and everything was procured, her aunts being unable to pay for her passage; how the English horse died of inflammation because he would not be at the trouble of giving it a dose of physic; how, in short, he was the most dilatory and good-tempered of men. Nay, more, the confidences which Emma, whose husband was resident railway-engineer at Timoorgunj, found occasion to

impart to her mamma by letter a circumstance which happened regularly every year, were invariably straightway communicated to all the ladies of Toghlukabad, whence, through the medium of the post, a throb of sympathy was duly diffused through each matronly bosom at the former station; so that poor Emma discounted the interest due to these interesting revelations long before there was any visible reason for claims to sympathy. Just the same thing had happened now; and while Eva and I in that first evening's walk had preserved our good faith by trying to look unconcerned and indifferent, her mamma, as it turned out, had communicated the whole morning's events in detail to Mrs Lawrie, wife of the general at Sikhistan; and when the latter, while offering her congratulations, asked whether it was not rather a poor match for Eva, since Captain West had nothing but his pay, and was known to be in debt, then Mrs Barton was able to describe my plethora of ready money in such glowing and circumstantial terms as made me, when I heard of it, heartily congratulate myself on my foresight in withholding all particulars about my good fortune. This communication was of course made to the other lady under the seal of confidence, and equally of course was all over Sirmoori the following day. Hence our plague-stricken aspect in the evening. But the climax was reached later in the day, when Eva and her mamma dined at The Castle, and the Lord High Commissioner was kind enough to apologise to the latter for my not having been invited also, as the Marchioness had only just heard of Captain West's great good fortune. Thereon Mrs Barton admitted the impeachment, adding, however, that it was not a "regular" engagement at pre-

sent, everything being contingent on Joe's giving his consent, while there was no knowing how her husband would act under the circumstances, or how long he would take to decide upon the matter; after which his lordship was treated, possibly not for the first time, with sundry instances of that eccentric man's perversities: how he lost the opium agency at Ahfimpoor because he would not take the trouble to write and accept the governor's offer of the appointment; how he had lost his deposit in the Bundelcund Bank because he neglected to register his claim when the bank smashed; and how, finally, Mary (now Mrs Abbott) had been kept at home a year after her proper time, until she was nineteen, because he put off remitting the passage-money till after the cold season. All which incidents of the dinner she related to me the following morning at breakfast, whereupon I considered myself set free from all conditional promises. But indeed Mr Barton had received by implication less than justice on this occasion; for he had sent an answer to his wife's letter by return of post, which arrived the succeeding day, and, as I had expected, he raised no sort of objection to the affair. Young people, he said, in so much of a brief note as we were able between us to decipher, were the best judges what was most desirable for their own happiness, and he had no desire to control his daughter's affections. As to means, the young couple would, of course, weigh well the pros and cons of the step, and not think of marrying until they saw their way to a competency. Press of business prevented his saying more.

This settled the matter so far as papa was concerned; but I have no doubt that "Joe's decision" was being freely discussed in Sirmoori

drawing-rooms the previous day, although those who knew him would pronounce that it was a foregone conclusion. Joseph Barton, of the Civil Service, and at present Commissioner of Toghluhabad, had the reputation of being the best racket-player and most indolent man in India. Punctual, but slow, in his official business, steady in his attendance at the station racket-court, he allowed every other description of business to take care of itself. He had never been known to read a book in his life, and very seldom to write a private letter. It was supposed, when he first came out, that he had some relations in England; but after efforts in vain to keep up a correspondence with him, the latter, when he had been a few years in India, had perforce dropped their communication with him, which was reopened by his wife on his marriage. This event took place after he had been about six years in the service, and when, simultaneously with entering on matrimony, he gave up field-sports, for which he had been famous as a bachelor, and took to rackets. From this time his wife, who was an indefatigable letter-writer, became a constant correspondent with the Misses Barton in England; and when the time arrived for the first instalment of children to be sent home, they were naturally consigned to the care of their aunts, now lapsing into old maidhood, to whom the change formed an agreeable occupation, and the remittances which followed an important addition to their slender income. After the first six years of their married life, Mrs Barton made her first expedition to Calcutta to send off the two eldest children; and similar consignments of one or two daughters followed at intervals, till at last, when dead low-

water was reached in the Indian nursery, the tide homeward ceased to ebb, and was soon followed by a return flow. Mary came first, then Emma, and so on about every year. Eva was the last importation, and one younger sister still remained in England. Their stay under the home roof was never long. All the girls were pretty and nice, and soon found homes of their own, more or less prosperous and comfortable, there being usually not much more time between the return to and final departure from the parental nest than sufficed to get out the wedding-dress from England, *vid* the Cape; and already the worthy man bid fair to rival the patriarchs of old in his progeny of grandchildren, born in various parts of the presidency, and most of whom the grandpapa had never seen.

Barton himself had never revisited England, or taken leave of any sort, his only moves having been from one station to another as he obtained his promotion through the different grades of assistant, magistrate, collector, and judge, till now finally he was landed as Commissioner of Toghluhabad, beyond which post it was generally understood he would not be promoted. And for many years his wife had never been parted from him, except for the above-mentioned journeys to Calcutta. But when the girls began to arrive from home, and Emma got a fever in her first hot season, Mrs Barton took them up to the hills, and had followed the practice ever afterwards, always occupying the same house at Sirmoori from April till the beginning of November each year, when her household and its attractions were transferred to Toghluhabad for the winter months. Barton himself, however, could never be induced to visit the hills. There were no swimming-baths there, he

said, and no fish for breakfast, and he could not play rackets in a covered court. In reality he was probably too lazy to attempt the journey, and rather liked the independence of bachelor life for a time. He could then dine without a coat and smoke in the drawing-room. However, he was always very glad indeed to see his wife and children when they returned from the hills, and readily agreed to the entertainments which Mrs Barton was famous for giving, when he appeared in a venerable dress-coat of twenty years' service, and usually slipped away to bed when the gentlemen left the dining-room. He always presented each of his daughters in turn on her arrival with an Arab horse, and a handsome watch and chain on her marriage. All other domestic arrangements were conducted by his wife. He never was known to write to any of his children; but when Sophy lost her eldest boy he shut himself up in his dressing-room with the 'Delhi Gazette' for a whole afternoon, and did not go to the racket-court for a couple of days.

My only personal acquaintance with Mr Barton had occurred several years before, when I was a subaltern with my battery at Mustaphapoor and he was judge of that favourite station; and I had often played rackets with him, and partaken of Mrs Barton's frequent hospitalities. Those were in the days of low tide, when only Eva's younger sister remained at home, a little, pale, fair-haired thing, talking Hindustani and broken English with a peculiar accent. But, coupling what I had seen of the man with what I had since heard—especially from Mrs Barton, who last season used to pour her complaints about Joe's perversity and indolence by the hour together into my sympathetic ear—I had not anticipated any opposition on his

part, and his letter was pretty much what I had expected.

All, then, was now happily settled; the engagement might be announced as a fact without qualification; and Eva and I were free to come and go without the exigencies of propriety demanding that her mamma should be following at an indefinite distance in the rear; while everybody who met us in our afternoon walks passed by without interruption, according to the approved custom in such cases. And now my horses arrived from Sirdhāna, and the tedious sedan could be exchanged for the saddle. Akbar was somewhat too impetuous for Eva's little hands to manage well; but Selim, my second charger, was the perfection of a lady's horse, docile, high-couraged, and with a mouth that might be held by a ribbon. I had never given way to the practice which the too easy ways of our regimental inspector rendered possible, of keeping up only one respectable charger, and passing off any old hack or buggy-horse as a second or third. My debts, indeed, were partly due to a sense of what the service demanded from a right-thinking horse-artilleryman, for Arabians at a hundred and fifty guineas apiece are not readily paid for out of one's allowances; but my imprudence in this respect now seemed like wisdom. Selim

was only less beautiful than his mistress; and as the little horse arched his glossy neck and bounded up the mountain-paths which at Sirmoori do duty for roads, snorting and champing his bit as if laughing to think what a feather-weight he carried, he seemed to know as well as his master how well a riding-habit set off Eva's slight figure, and what a graceful picture the two made together. That charming mountain landscape had surely never a prettier foreground.

Then came a ball, to which of course everybody went. Eva wanted to teach me to dance for the occasion, and being no ways loath to receive instruction from such a mistress, we had sundry practisings in the drawing-room, the round table and sofa being wheeled out into the verandah; but notwithstanding the favourable circumstances, the clumsy pupil did not make sufficient progress to warrant an appearance in public; Eva declared she must not dance with anybody else, and although I begged her to reconsider her decision, and we had almost a little quarrel about it, she refused all partners except for quadrilles; and while longing, I could see, for a waltz, rather hugged the idea of preserving her engagement dignity.

VOLTAIRE.

MR MORLEY'S book* upon the great French philosopher, just published, will no doubt bring the name and character of Voltaire freshly before many readers, who have only the vague general knowledge of him which readers are apt to have of a writer whose works have fallen into that oblivion of greatness which is scarcely less complete than the oblivion of littleness, and whose personal mould is no longer attractive to, or representative of, the age. His is one of the names which "everybody" knows; and everybody knows something about him. Certain facts in his history, certain things he has produced, are part of the general foundation of knowledge which comes to us, we do not well know how, from the fathers and grandfathers to whom the quaint and old-fashioned distance of last century bore a personal interest. We know something of Voltaire's tragedies, something of *Candide* and *Dr Pangloss*, something of his histories, and a great deal about his connection with the Great Frederic, and the miserable quarrels and spite of that philosophic circle. We know too that he holds a place in French literature of very high importance, and even in something more than French literature. In France herself, spiritual and moral, there is still a kind of galvanic life in the strange figure, half buffoon, half philosopher, which probably takes its chief value from the fact that in itself it was the most perfectly representative figure of his age. The man Voltaire died nearly a hundred years ago, but still Voltairism is spoken of as if it were a fit antagonist of Christianity on the

other side of the Channel, and his influence represents at once to his enemies and his friends a power immensely greater than any name of his century—nay, than all the names of his century put together—have left among ourselves. No inquiry could be more curious and interesting than the question how this all came about. The reader, however, will not be able to make this out from "*Voltaire, by John Morley*," which, though a work of much learning and some eloquence, is not historical but critical, and demands an acquaintance at once with the man and his works which we fear only scholars possess. Approaching the subject from no scholarly point of view, and without any desire to enter into the miserable maze of clever argument by which Voltaire "*se sentit appelé à détruire les préjugés de toutes espèces*," we shall endeavour to throw a little light upon the character and position of this remarkable personage, for a real and searching examination of his work and influence in history would require an amount of space and labour which we cannot pretend to give. Mr Morley makes very high claims for his hero: "When the right sense of historical proportion is more fully developed in men's minds," he says, "the name of Voltaire will stand for as much as the names of the great classic movements in the European advance, like the Revival of learning or the Reformation." This is making more than a man of the great representative figure of the seventeenth century. We should have thought that to place him on an equality with Luther would have

* Voltaire. By John Morley. London, 1872.

been distinction enough, but Mr Morley seems to require more than this. And, indeed, Luther does not occupy anywhere the same living position which the name of Voltaire occupies in men's mouths, at least on the other side of the Channel. It is a difficult position for an individual with so many imperfections on his head. His system was not a lofty one, whatever its success may have been, and in his own person he was very far from blameless. It is not an apostolic figure, nor a celestial work, which can be presented to us, even by the warmest of partisans, but still it is one which has filled a large place in the eyes of the world, and which in many ways is extremely curious. Everybody whose opinion has been worth recording for the last hundred years has given some deliverance on this subject; and, as Mr Morley tells us, these judgments have been about as diverse as there have been lips to utter them. He is himself very deeply impressed with the importance of Voltaire's work. Yet he does not disguise, but rather, if we may say so, takes a kind of serious pleasure in recording the many animadversions which have attended his hero's name.

"Voltaireism may stand for the name of the Renaissance of the eighteenth century, for that name takes in all the serious haltings and shortcomings of this strange movement, as well as its terrible fire, swiftness, sincerity, and strength. The rays from Voltaire's burning and far-shining spirit no sooner struck upon the genius of the time, seated dark and dead like the black stone of Memnon's statue, than the clang of the breaking chord was heard through Europe, and men awoke in new day and more spacious air. The sentimentalist has proclaimed him a mere mocker. To the critics of the schools ever ready with compendious label, he is the revolutionary destructive. To each alike of the countless orthodox sects, his name is the symbol for the prevailing of the gates of hell.

Erudition figures him as shallow and a trifler: culture condemns him for pushing his hatred of spiritual falsehood much too seriously: Christian charity feels constrained to unmask a demon from the depths of the pit. The plain men of the earth, who are apt to measure the merits of a philosopher by the strength of his sympathy with existing sources of comfort, would generally approve the saying of Dr Johnson, that he would sooner sign a sentence for Rousseau's transportation than that of any felon who had gone from the Old Bailey for many years, and that the difference between him and Voltaire was so slight that 'it would be difficult to settle the proportions of iniquity between them.' Those of all schools and professions who have the temperament which mistakes strong expressions for strong judgment, and violent phrase for grounded conviction, have been stimulated by antipathy against Voltaire to a degree that, in any of them with latent turns for humour, must now and then have stirred a kind of reacting sympathy. The rank vocabulary of malice and hate, noisome fringe of the history of opinion, has received many of its most fulminant terms from critics of Voltaire, along with some from Voltaire himself, who unwisely did not refuse to follow an adversary's bad example.

"Yet Voltaire was the very eye of modern illumination."

Thus applauded on one side and assailed on the other, worshipped, abused, flattered, and menaced, with an extravagance and intensity of feeling unknown to common men, the character of Voltaire can be no ordinary one. He was a poet, a historian, a philosopher, and a critic. In every single branch of his pursuits he has been, even in his own country, surpassed; yet no individual of all his rivals holds anything like such a position in the world and the age. Few people read his works nowadays, but still fewer ignore his reputation. The mass of volumes which compose his pedestal are overrun with moss and closed with the ivies and cling-

ing tendrils of the past, but the figure above them, with all its defects and meannesses—heaven knows, as poor a figure of a man as ever was mounted on that eminence—holds its place still, though the general mind does not quite know why.

François Marie Arouet, calling himself, for some reason or other, which none of his biographers seem quite able to make out, Voltaire, was born in February 1694, in Paris. His father was well off, and of respectable condition, holding an employment in the public service; and he was educated, as a child in his circumstances brought up by parents who meant him to rise in the world naturally would be, at a college taught by the Jesuits. Even at this early age the child must have shown a freedom from national prejudices and spiritual necessities greater than ordinary, for one of the reverend fathers prophesied of him that he would yet be the *Coryphée du Désisme* in France. He was launched into the world at an early age, and under the most "*heureuses circonstances*," as his biographer, Condorcet, assures us, under the special patronage of several of those brilliant and delightful abbés—churchmen whose only ecclesiastical habit was their soutane, and who did not pretend to the smallest shred either of faith or morals—who abound in all the memoirs of the period. One of the protectors of his youth was the famous Ninon, who left him a legacy to buy books, and approved greatly of the lad. With such instructors his mind developed rapidly. The tide had turned, by that time, of the Grand Monarque's splendour and popularity. That false but gorgeous culmination of success and magnificence was over, and the terrible chaos which followed began to rise darkly—not yet apparent—with all its tragic disorders yet undeve-

loped, the dim beginnings of something new preparing for the death-struggle with the old world, which no one as yet foresaw. The Court was under the sway of Madame de Maintenon, and had become fictitiously good and religious as it had once been fictitiously joyous and popular; and Paris and its society, which was not growing old like Louis, went, as was not unnatural, into violent opposition, and "out of disgust for the severities of Versailles, carried freedom and pleasure to the extent of licence." Nothing could be more gay, more brilliant, more attractive than that cleverest and wickedest climax of good company; and young Voltaire, whose *petites epigrammes* seem to date back to a very early period in his existence, was the true child of his time, at once its best representative and its crowning production. That was not the age of revolution. Nearly a century had to come and go ere the grim practical seriousness of the national soul, driven frantic by misery, had to take up the coarser work, and make all the *persiflage* and all the witticisms into a tremendous reality, at which the gayest society ceased to laugh. In the mean time *petites epigrammes* were what the world lived for, and other things equally *petites*. It was the age of *petites maisons*, *petites soupers*, and many more charming indulgences—opposed to all of which stood a black-cowled frowning Church, of which in their secret souls most people were a little afraid, which set its face against everything—opinions, epigrams, pleasant little vices, all that Paris held most dear. The Church was not, let us allow, attractive at that period. It was one of her dark days, when the flesh had gained upon her largely, and when her faithful regiments who stood firm had grown morose, and even cruel,

at sight of the temptations around, which other people yielded to, which they had themselves the virtue to resist, but not the virtue to hate. Half-a-dozen gay abbés, leading lives a trifle wicked and more luxurious than those of their lay companions, naturally produced at least one gloomy priest, who, being but a man of his time like them, was exasperated and acerbated by his own goodness, and only too glad, when he had the chance, to shut the gates, not of heaven only, but even of the grave, upon the scoffer who defied him. The two opposite sides acted upon each other as they always do. Lawless wit and mockery on one hand, produced—what could they else?—fierce, hysterical, and often foolish zeal on the other. The wicked world had so much the best of it in every way, to all appearance, that it is hard to blame a depressed and languid Church, partaking but too much of the spiritual deadness of the time, for having had recourse—God, or perhaps rather the devils, knew how—to those wild outbursts of miracle which it is so impossible to understand, and which, while powerless and meaningless for any good, give the adversary always a double occasion to blaspheme. The only alternative known by Voltaire to his own giddy, merry, agreeable, and unprincipled society was this austere, disagreeable, pleasure-condemning, miracle-producing Church. It was understood that this gloomy apparition was seated at the portals which led out of life, and that in mockery or in terror it was well to conciliate and make terms with her, as soon as these portals were approached; but up to that disagreeable moment, which no one cared to look forward to, Superstition, which was her name, was the fairest and the foremost object for all the gibes and pleasantries of an audacious society—the cause of

inextinguishable laughter, when not of indignation. Except this visible and not pleasant embodiment of the Church, he and his contemporaries seem to have had no idea of anything representing a higher life than their own. This is their distinguishing peculiarity among the ages. Other generations have disputed and opposed, as hotly and more effectually, the sway of Rome—have stigmatised and abused, and even satirised and laughed at her; but these generations were always more or less officered and inspired by men with a creed which they believed to be more pure, and a higher ideal of life than that which they assailed. The age of Voltaire was embarrassed with no such idealism. If the Church was never less attractive than in that unhappy age, the world was never more distinct. It did not even profess that code of primitive morality, natural right and wrong, which modern unbelievers often embellish by lives which are almost saintly; no such ideas existed in the lively brain of the eighteenth century. Mr Morley, who belongs to the nineteenth, candidly, and without any difficulty, allows this. For instance, the most fundamental of all natural virtues, that upon which society is built, and the value of which, on its lowest ground, even savage nations have an appreciation of, was not only ignored, but ridiculed by the age. Personal purity was a weakness, a folly, almost a vice in its eyes, and chiefly for the reason that it had been partially deified by the Church. On this subject Mr Morley speaks as follows:—

“The peculiarity of the licence of France in the middle of the eighteenth century is, that it was looked upon with complacency by the great intellectual leaders of opinion. It took its place in the progressive formula. What austerity was to other forward move-

ments, licence was to this. It is not difficult to perceive how so extraordinary a circumstance came to pass. Chastity was the supreme virtue in the eyes of the Church, the mystic key to the Christian holiness. Continence was one of the most sacred of the pretensions by which the organised preachers of superstition claimed the reverence of men and women. It was identified, therefore, in a particular manner with that Infamous against which the main assault of the times was directed. So men contended, more or less expressly—first, that continence was no commanding chief among virtues; then that it was a very superficial and easily-practised virtue; finally, that it was no virtue at all, but, if sometimes a convenience, generally an impediment to free human happiness."

We have no desire to misrepresent either the age or the hero. This is Mr Morley's statement of the question. That which is of all other restrictions the one most vitally important to society, was thus abolished by society itself, because it was held in special esteem by "Superstition." It is therefore evident that this age did not dream of opposing to "Superstition" any purer idealism, but that its law of nature was the simple law of the animal world, and that it was content to place its rebellion on the lowest and most distinct ground: no complications, no *nuances*, were in this straightforward profession of faith; and, to do the men justice, they lived up to their creed.

This, however, makes a broad distinction between the unbelief of Voltaire's age and those kinds of unbelief with which we are more familiar. The two sides were perfectly distinct, and at the same time perfectly harmonious. On one hand, hell-fire and all its flames, and, if occasion offered, legal fire of a still more undesirable kind, fagots in the market-place, and other such indisputable arguments; and on the other a pleasant, partially-legalised,

frankly-acknowledged vileness on principle, for which, perhaps, the fagots were the only reasonable medicine. Little reason enough there was between them, heaven knows—miserable fleshly vengeance on the one hand, miserable fleshly wantonness made into a creed on the other. Such were the two forces which Voltaire saw partaking the world between them when he burst into it, in all the glory and ardour of that youth of genius which is the most heavenly or the most devilish of all powers under the sun.

We cannot follow his youthful career in detail; twice over he managed to get himself into the Bastille in that period when *lettres de cachets* rained from the official skies of France. The first time, his offence or supposed offence was political. It was immediately after the death of Louis XIV., when, amid a shower of other satires and execrations, there was published a very clever and indeed powerful set of verses entitled "*Les j'ai vu*." These are printed in some editions of his works, as "*attribués faussement*" to Voltaire, but this denial is very vague, and they are sufficiently striking to warrant the idea that they were his. After a melancholy record of all the wrongs which "*j'ai vu*," the verses terminate as follow:—

" J'ai vu un hypocrite honoré,
J'ai vu, c'est tout dire, un jésuite adoré,
J'ai vu ces maux sous le règne funeste
D'un prince qui jadis la colère celeste
Accorda, par vengeance, à nos desirs
ardens ;
J'ai vu ces maux, et je n'ai pas vingt
ans."

"He was a little more than twenty-two," says Condorcet, "and the police looked upon that conformity of age as a sufficient proof to deprive him of his liberty." His second imprisonment was occasioned

by a little incident still more characteristic of the period. The young *homme d'esprit*, who was nobody, made a saucy answer to no less a personage than a Rohan at some one of the convivial meetings which he has described with gay vanity as made up of princes and poets. The Rohan, too splendid to descend to personal means of punishment, had the daring young plebeian cudgelled by his lackeys at the very door of the house of the Duc de Sulli where the *bon-mot* had been said. Young Voltaire "would have taken means," says Condorcet, cautiously, "to avenge his outraged honour—means authorised by the manners of modern nations, but condemned by their laws;" in other words, Mr Morley tells us, he tried to induce his princely insulter to fight him. But that would have been too great an honour for a poet, and the Rohan sent him to the Bastille instead. This, which would have disgusted many a man with fine society, and which no doubt was one instance of the many insulting indignities which at last drove France mad, and gave her some kind of wild excuse for the awful retribution she exacted, had no such embittering effect upon Voltaire. He grinned and bore it, no doubt, with literal exactitude; and on his liberation from prison in six months found himself banished from Paris, and made the best of his fate by going to England, which, so far as his personal success went, was undoubtedly by much the best thing that could have befallen him.

There is, however, one little incident of this preface of his life which, though trifling enough, is worth quoting. During his first imprisonment he finished and prepared for the stage 'Edipus,' his first tragedy. At one of its earliest repetitions an intruder suddenly appeared upon the stage, holding up the train of the high priest, and mimick-

ing his high-tragic step and bearing. The Maréchale de Villars, who was present, asked who was the young man who evidently was trying to ruin the piece! She was told it was the author! This curious piece of juvenile cynicism and mockery even of himself, procured for him the acquaintance of the lady, for whom he immediately conceived a profound and unrequited passion—the first and most serious of his life. Perhaps there was a certain poetic justice in this result of his *étourderie*: it made him lose a great deal of time which he afterwards mourned over, but no doubt, which would be a consolation, extended his connection still further with the society he loved.

The time of Voltaire's visit to England was one specially favourable for him. Mr Morley mentions as a surprise and novelty to the visitor, the high place which he found to be occupied in England by literary men. "The poet," he says, "who had been thrown into prison for resenting a whipping from a nobleman's lackeys, found himself in a country where Newton and Locke were rewarded with lucrative places in the administration of the country, where Prior and Gay acted in important embassies, and where Addison was a secretary of state." This sounds very fine, but we cannot help doubting whether the sharp-sighted Frenchman could have felt much envy for these seeming splendid appointments. He himself executed important missions in after-times, but he had the wisdom not often belonging to his race to make himself independent, and to trust his provision to no one—a circumstance which, in all countries, smooths matters immensely for the man of literature. But there has never perhaps been a time when the English republic of letters so much resembled the French in its tone, and

laws, and manners. Unique among the ages, that period of literature submitted itself, as none in England had done before or has done since, to those rules of correct art which have always reigned on the other side of the Channel. Whatever new principles Voltaire drew from it, its love for the unities, its terror for the barbarisms of genius, its ideas of grace and melody in style, were like his own. And so to a great extent was its moral attitude,—an attitude almost equally profane, but not polemically immoral, for the simple reason that “Superstition”—*i.e.*, the Church—did not possess the same power in England as in France, and could not enforce the same penalties. It was a thing which could be good-humouredly ignored, laughed at, or patronised with contemptuous complaisance, without any breach of recognised good manners or public scandal. This curious and delightful freedom from all obtrusive claims must have struck him at once, as every difference which lies on the surface strikes a stranger; and the careless Protestant ease of men never required to doff a hat before a passing cross, or bend a knee to any sacramentary procession, no doubt impressed him with a sense of absolute freedom from all the troublesome circumstances of religion. And then, of course, the England of his experience was the class which received him, as it is to all strangers. The real heart of the country, which has always been kept sound by unostentatious piety and reverential feeling, was as much out of his reach as Kamschatka; but he knew the wits, who never before or since have had things so much their own way on the gay surface of society, and he found himself no doubt in a sort of Paradise in that free-speaking and free-thinking world.

Voltaire’s scepticism, up to this

time, as Mr Morley points out, had been but an instinctive opposition to the Church, its severities and pretensions. But he now discovered with delight that philosophy had gone a great deal further, and that there was scarcely any limit to the length which his friends permitted themselves to go. He found these friends pervaded by a deism founded on “the philosophy of Shaftesbury, expounded by Bolingbroke, and embellished by the poetry of Pope.” He made acquaintance with the two greater shadows of Newton and Locke, which, without any will of theirs, dominated, or seemed to dominate, that clever chaos: and without in the least entering into the higher spirit of these great names, he took up so much of their teaching as was congenial to him. He learnt that imagination must be banished from reasoning by the severe laws of induction; that no theory must be accepted without being proved; and that the understanding can know nothing that is not communicated to it by the senses. Upon these precious intellectual tools he pounced with all the avidity of his nature. No doubt it was something like a new gospel which they revealed to him. For it must be remembered that this young genius, the last flower of a most corrupt society, trained in what we have ventured to call polemical immorality, was one of those curious exceptional men born now and then into the world, without any apparent trace in him of that portion of human nature commonly called soul. Voltaire had an excess of intellect. He had something which served him very well for a heart, and which was capable of some honest and real emotions—he had feeling and unquestionable benevolence; but he does not seem to have had any spiritual necessities, or even consciousness that spiritual necessities could

be. Mr Morley comments upon the weakness of that "form of Christian profession which now fascinates many fine and subtle minds," which is founded upon the belief, or rather "assumption, that there are certain inborn cravings in the human heart, constant, profound, and inextinguishable," of which Christianity is the fullest satisfaction. With this "graceful development of belief," Voltaire, he says, had no acquaintance; and he imagines how his hero "would have sought the grounds for calling those aspirations universal." On this point we entirely agree with Mr Morley. We believe that such aspirations are not universal, and that a learned and exhaustive study of the examples of humanity of whom it can be clearly proved that they do not possess anything of the kind, would be one of the most interesting of historical investigations. Voltaire was one of these men; so was Hume, who lived and influenced the same age, and was a very different character from Voltaire. Both of them lived long lives, were fully recompensed in this world for all they had done and intended to do, reaped their harvests, finished their work, and really do not seem to have had in their lives, or to have left behind them, any wrong unredressed, any advantage unsecured, which would make another world necessary. Perhaps the inquiry would be an audacious one, but, could we follow it out, and discover in the career of other men of corresponding character the same wonderful completeness and finish of the mortal cycle, there might be grounds for building a very curious theory upon the subject. The instances, however, are too few to make this easily practicable. Voltaire was one of those singular beings. Without meaning the slightest disrespect, or desiring to use any-

thing but the most impartial scientific language, we know no better way of describing him than to say that he was a man without a soul. He had no spiritual necessities of his own, and he regarded those of others with simple curiosity and wonder, if not with indignation and contempt. The strange weakness of many human creatures in this respect—their craving for unseen fortification, consolation, and counsel—their attempt to establish relations with the unknown—was to him what the raptures of a party of musical amateurs are to a man without an ear. He listens to their discussions with surprised and half-curious derision. What do the blockheads mean? Are these ecstasies put on for a purpose, mere affectations of enthusiasm; or are they so besotted as really to imagine that they have found beauty and meaning in the succession of noises which convey no sense whatever to him? This example is not at all an uncommon one; and those who have either felt the difficulty in their own persons, or been made the confidant of others, will know how bewildering to all the faculties is this absence of one. Voltaire was in this position in respect to religion. Many incidents in his life dispose us to believe that he looked upon it as mere acting; a farce in which, when needful, he was quite ready to play his part, as other men played theirs, in obedience to some grotesque and incomprehensible prejudice. But he was absolutely destitute of the faculty for understanding what the word really meant, and what the great mass of men in all ages have understood by it. When we say this, we feel that we are defending and not assailing his character; his infidelity had no evil intention in it. He thoroughly and honestly believed that he was doing the very best thing by his countrymen in

conveying his new light to them. He was not only convinced of the justice of his philosophy, but also that it was the best of philosophies, clearing away all mists from the horizon, and defining clearly the real and legitimate objects of human endeavour. When he came back to France, "se sentant appelé à détruire des préjugés de toutes espèces," it was with a fine glow of sentiment that he recognised his duty. To himself the world was much improved in every way by the clearing off of so many ridiculous mysteries. He was more at his ease in it; and though even to him this reasonable world, wherein men managed their own affairs without any interposition on the part of God, took by moments the maddest air of chaos, wild bacchanal dance of folly and ruin, yet he felt it enough for him and asked no more. A man whose intellect alone is convinced of the negation of all things, may go mad of it or die in despair, as some few men have done; but the man without a soul is cheerful in the midst of the dissolving views and breaking-up scenery of the ancient heaven; and the more cheerfully content he is with himself, the more effectual is his influence upon others. He is like the Christian disciples, an epistle read of all men. If Voltaire, one of the finest minds of his age, was thus impervious to all religious impressions, and cheerfully satisfied to do without them, how was he to imagine in lesser natures a finer susceptibility than his own? or how were these lesser natures to credit their own longings against the testimony of this *homme supérieur*? Thus he was clothed for his mission in mail which made him personally invulnerable, without even a spiritual tendon Achilles attainable to his adversaries.

Toleration, we believe, was once a difficult virtue. It has now be-

come so much a fashion that even those who profit by it most grow weary of its mild forbearances. And it is the very philosophers whose existence, so to speak, is guaranteed by its principles, who, tired of so much gentle humbug, have begun to teach the world once more that it is best to call a spade a spade. For a long time past we have all been disposed to believe that assaults upon established religions are far from being necessarily irreligious; and to allow that very good men—men of pure character and natural piety, are to be found in the class which our forefathers would have broadly stigmatised, hated, and probably burnt, as infidels. Indeed there has of late years been a tendency to exalt the holy unbeliever to a quite disproportionate elevation. This habitual prejudice makes it painful for us to assert of any assault upon established religion that it is not really in its way a religious movement, an attempt at something better, a kind of crusade of enlightenment and high principle, with purer tendencies and higher aims than religion itself. But scientific truthfulness compels us to admit that the Voltairism of Voltaire and his times was entirely an irreligious movement. This fact separates it broadly from all such systems as that of Comte, for example, which professes to replace with something else of a spiritual character the ancient economy which it attempted to destroy. Voltaire and his age went broadly on the contrary principle that religion was unnecessary and superfluous; not one special religion, but all, or any; and that the world was better without it. He had no objections to a vague god and a vague immortality for those who cared for such visions; but his whole system was absolutely non-spiritual. We have already indicated that in one particular at least,

and that a most important one, it was also non-moral. Thus the greatest and most successful movement against Christianity—that which has lived and lasted, and still holds its head in ostentatious vitality among living influences—was a system which (scientifically) ignored all religious principle and feeling whatever, and which permitted and indeed encouraged immorality. Old-fashioned people took this for granted, and acted accordingly: but the evident fact, that systems which affect the hearts and lives of men do not generally triumph by their easiness; and the modern prejudice, that there must be some pure nucleus of goodness in everything which permanently attracts men—makes us only capable of admitting to ourselves, with a certain surprise, that in this one movement at least, neither moral purity nor spiritual elevation are to be found; nay, not even a hint of them, nor any germ from which they could spring. Here was no prophet sweeping away a host of tributary gods, to establish the one Supreme Authority in the world; no purifier of the temple, driving out fraud and gain to bring in purity and prayer; no moralist even, sick of a host of permitted sins, and sworn to bring virtue back into a polluted earth. Nothing of all this. To our thinking, all the ascetic crusades of history, all the Reformations, moral Revolutions, fanaticisms, persecutions, are easy of comprehension in comparison. For once the old, easy, absolute idea that men threw off spiritual belief because they hated moral restrictions, and that Vice was the parent of Infidelity—a doctrine of very difficult tenure, but perhaps too completely ignored in this tolerant age—seems to have found proof and justification. Voltaire, Mr Morley tells us, is as notable in the world's history as the Reformation. He is,

France tells us, still eminent in the midst of her, a power against which Religion feels all her efforts kept in perpetual strain. And yet there is no possibility of either spiritual or moral influence in him, nothing that elevates the mind or expands the heart. The fact is very extraordinary, and not very flattering to mankind.

Mr Morley is very distinct upon this unspiritual and un-moral character of his hero's system. "It contained no element of asceticism," he says; it was a "reaction against the subordination of the intellectual to the moral side of man." It had no aid from the higher imagination, which indeed it ignored, along with the subjects which interest that divinest faculty—nor from the moral consciousness, which is so effectual an auxiliary in most human movements. Gay Reason, intensely clear-sighted within its range, arm in arm with pleasant Vice, thus went forth one day as in a fable; and without the power of touching one human heart or purifying one human life—without the means and equally without the intention—conquered an age! Surely the most curious conquest, the most incomprehensible victory, ever won in this astounding world.

Condorcet gives us with delightful *naïveté* a sketch of the manner in which the young exile on his return from England applied himself to the gigantic work of destroying every kind of prejudice in his native country. "He felt that it was possible to secure success by a happy mixture of boldness and malleability; by knowing when to yield to the spirit of the time, when to take advantage of it, and when to form it anew; by making use, in their turn, and adroitly, of reason, of humour, of the charm of poetry, and the hits of the theatre; in short, by making Reason simple enough to

become popular, indulgent (*aimable*) enough not to frighten frivolity, and sufficiently attractive to become the fashion. This great project of making himself, by the power of his genius alone, the benefactor of an entire people, by tearing it from its errors, inflamed the heart of Voltaire, and kindled his courage. He swore to consecrate his life to it—and he kept his word."

For about twenty years after his return to Paris, Voltaire pursued his labours either there or in the country, with, however, little appearance of conscious and systematic devotion to any such grand aim. During this time he produced most of his best plays, some of his histories, altogether a great deal of work on many subjects, and in many styles. His epic, of which France was to be so proud, his tragedies, which are, perhaps, the part of his labours best known to after-generations, belong to this period; and so do a host of incidents—some of them to his credit, some the reverse—which reveal to us his strange, active, versatile life, full of bustle and occupation, of work and excitement, of flattery and abuse, of personal generousities and meannesses. With a wisdom and clear-sightedness which many an author since would gladly have shared had circumstances permitted, and which, could it be generally adopted, would perhaps do more good to literature than any other device ever thought of, Voltaire resolved from an early period of his career to secure his freedom of action by an admirable and simple rule. "He determined to become rich in order to be independent." This admirable resolution emancipated him in every way; and fortunately his father and brother, both dead by this time, had left him enough to make a good foundation. He speculated, he lent money at interest, he was a sharp

man of business, exact and prudent. He placed himself in such a happy position at last that he had no need either "to seek patrons, to solicit places, or to negotiate with publishers," and required only to consult himself as to when or what he should write, whom he should criticise and whom praise—a most enviable independence, but one which lies within the reach of but a few. Notwithstanding this precaution, however, he came very often in collision with authorities of all kinds, and had as pretty a list of quarrels on hand as ever fell to any man's share. He was forbidden to print one of his tragedies. He had to leave the capital in consequence of his ode, an innocent effusion enough, upon the death of Madlle. Lecouvreur. His '*Lettres sur les Anglais*' was burned publicly by order of the Parliament of Paris, an agreeable incident which recurred frequently in his career, and which even his enlightened friend Frederick repeated at Berlin. Banished from Paris for this publication, and again for the '*Pour et Contre*,' sometimes called '*L'Épître à Uranie*,' he led a sufficiently restless and lively life. "Amid those storms," says Condorcet, "the lieutenant of police, Herault, said one day to Voltaire, 'Whatever you write, you will never succeed in destroying the Christian religion.' 'That is just what we shall see,'" said the other, calmly. To such a point had his ambition grown. And yet an aim so immense would seem to have required a different kind of action. It is as curious a particular, perhaps, as any in the story, that a man so full of ability and power should have believed it possible that he could destroy the Christian religion by means of brilliant tragedies and essays, and epistles to Uranie. Few things could show more clearly at

once the immense self-confidence of his intellect, and his absolute incapacity to understand those forces against which he pitted himself with such glib composure.

To this period of his life belongs his connection with Madame du Châtelet, which is one of the most curious episodes in the history of philosophy, the most whimsical kind of improper *liaison* that ever surely was recorded. It lasted fifteen years; and though the necessities of the time exacted, we suppose, some fiction of *amour*, at least at its commencement, it was evidently a good, steady friendship of two people of corresponding tastes, with as little passion about it as was likely to stimulate two students working together over their books. Both of them competed for a prize offered by the Academy of Sciences for an essay on the nature and propagation of fire; and they contended on different sides in a purely philosophical *concours*, in which Voltaire took the side of Descartes and Newton against Leibnitz and Bernouilli. Madame du Châtelet conferred upon him the advantage of a chateau in the country, where labour was the order of the day. She led him a stormy life, full of ups and downs, in which nothing was uninterrupted except the work. We quote—not from the original descriptions, which are at once too piquant and too lengthy for our space, but from Mr Morley's present book, and from Mr Carlyle's brilliant essay upon Voltaire, published many years ago—the two following pictures of the life of this remarkable pair:—

"The truly important feature of the life which Voltaire led at Cirey" (says Mr Morley), "was its unremitting diligence. Like a Homeric goddess, the divine Emilie poured a cloud round her hero. There is a sort of moral climate in a household, an impalpable,

unseizable, indefinable set of influences which predispose the inmates to industry and self-control, or else relax fibre and slacken purpose. At Cirey there was an almost monastic rule. Madame Gratiigny says, that though Voltaire felt himself bound by politeness to pay her a visit from time to time in her apartment, he usually avoided sitting down, apologetically protesting how frightful a thing is the quantity of time people lose in talking, and that waste of time is the most fatal extravagance of which one can be guilty. He seems to have usually passed the whole day at his desk, or in making physical experiments in his chamber. The only occasion on which people met was at the supper, at nine in the evening. Until then, the privacy of the chamber, alike of the hostess, who was analysing Leibnitz or translating Newton, and of the unofficial host, who was compiling material for the '*Siècle de Louis XIV.*' or polishing and repolishing '*Mahomet*,' or investigating the circumstances of the propagation of fire, was sacredly inviolable."

Our next quotation is more amusing, as it gives an idea not so much of Voltaire's privileges and advantages in this strange life, as of some of the penalties he had to pay for them—penalties such as, in one shape or other, most people have to pay for all advantages thus equivocally acquired.

"Setting aside its whole criminality, which indeed perhaps went for little then, this literary *amour* wears but a mixed aspect; short sun-gleams with long tropical tornadoes; touches of guitar music, soon followed by Lisbon earthquakes. Marmontel, we remember, speaks of knives being used, or at least brandished, and for quite other purposes than carving. Madame la Marquise was no saint in any sense, but rather a Socrates' spouse, who would keep patience and the whole philosophy of gaiety in constant practice. Like Queen Elizabeth, if she had the talents of a man, she had more than the caprices of a woman.

"We shall take only one item, and that a small one, in this mountain of misery—her strange habits and methods

of locomotion. She is perpetually travelling; a peaceful philosopher is lugged over the world to Cirey, to Lunéville, to that *pied à terre* in Paris; resistance avails not; here, as in so many other cases, *il faut se ranger*. Sometimes, precisely on the eve of such a departure, her domestics, exasperated by hunger and ill-usage, will strike work in a body, and a new set has to be collected at an hour's warning. Then Madame has been known to keep the postilions cracking and *sacre-ing* at the gate from morn till dewy eve, simply because she was playing cards, and the games went against her. But figure a lean and vivid-tempered philosopher starting from Paris at last, under cloud of night, during hard frost, in a huge lumbering coach, or rather waggon, compared with which, indeed, the generality of modern waggons were a luxurious conveyance. With four starved, and perhaps spavined, hacks, he slowly sets forth 'under a mountain of bandboxes;' at his side sits the wandering virago, in front of him a waiting-maid with additional bandboxes, '*et divers effets de sa matresse*'. At the next stage the postilions have to be beat up; they come out swearing. Cloaks and furbelishes avail little against the January cold; 'time and hours,' are, once more, the only hope; but, lo! at the tenth mile, this Tyburn coach breaks down! One many-voiced discordant wail shrieks through the solitude making night hideous—but in vain; the axle-tree has given way, the vehicle has overset, and marchioness, chamber-maids, bandboxes, and philosophers are weltering in inextricable chaos.

What would Dr Kitchener, with his 'Traveller's Oracle,' have said to all this? For there is snow on the ground, and four peasants must be roused from a village half a league off before that accursed vehicle can so much as be lifted from its beam-ends! Vain it is for Longchamps, far in advance sheltered in a hospitable though half-dismantled chateau, to pluck pigeons and be in haste to roast them; they will never be eaten to supper, scarcely to breakfast next morning! Nor is it now only, but several times, that this unhappy axle-tree plays them foul; nay

once, beggared by Madame's gambling, they have not cash to pay for mending it, and the smith, though they are in keenest flight almost for their lives, will not trust them.

"We imagine that these are trying things to any philosopher."

Voltaire accordingly had his difficulties in his remarkable domestic arrangements like so many other men, and the strange *château de labré* in which he spent so many of these years, enclosed within its quaint old walls scenes as extraordinary as ever the supreme tragi-comedy of life has presented to the amazed eyes of posterity. The house, with all its chief rooms thus occupied, the droll brief visits paid from one chamber to another, the silent absorption in work, and sudden outbursts of storm, make up one of the most wonderful interiors ever revealed. But the work rolled on among those queer surroundings. After two or three years spent in physical studies—investigations about fire and other such curiously inappropriate yet typical subjects—Voltaire had the good sense to consult Clairaut as to the likelihood of his ever becoming great in that sphere of study. "Clairaut had the frankness to answer that by dint of obstinate work he could only count on making himself an indifferent philosopher (*savant médiocre*), and would thus lose the time which he owed to poetry and philosophy." Accordingly, to poetry and philosophy he turned again, resuming all his earlier industries. At Cirey, he wrote, Condorcet tells us, '*Alzire*,' '*Zulima*,' and '*Mahomet*;' completed his '*Discours sur l'Homme*,' wrote the history of Charles XII, prepared the '*Siècle de Louis XIV.*,' and collected materials for his essay '*Sur les Mœurs et l'Esprit des Nations*.' We doubt whether any one of these works could be called truly great, but the

effect they produced upon their time was great, and the fame that resulted from them immense. 'Mahomet,' for instance, a famous effort to embody a great conception, is in reality a work founded on the lowest possible idea of the prophet's character—such an idea as the narrowest of religious bigots has long found to be untenable. The great Arab is the most commonplace soldier of fortune, clever enough to secure for himself the aid of fanaticism, in Voltaire's drama, a man whose entire policy is influenced by an inclination for a slave-girl who has been brought up to worship him, and who is unconsciously in love with her own brother, and aiding and abetting that brother in the murder of their father. That this plot should be the composition of the man who calls Hamlet a "rude and barbarous piece," and describes it as such a work as might be "the fruit of the imagination of a drunken savage," is a most curious fact. Mr Morley, though he allows that "anybody with a true sense of poetry would sacrifice all the plays that Voltaire ever wrote . . . for the soliloquy in Hamlet," still applauds "the concentration and regularity" of the principles of construction of the French drama—principles thus illustrated by one of the most famous works of his hero. We are far from asserting, however, that Voltaire's tragedies are unworthy of admiration. There is a sustained fire and energy in the style which breaks over the bounds of the Alexandrines, and carries the reader along with a sympathy and interest which are very high tributes to a kind of poetry which is so much out of our natural way. 'Merope,' for instance, as a sustained and powerful study of one passion, is like a fine picture in monotone. There is nothing to disturb the one situation, the severely-guarded unity

of sentiment. Variety has been entirely sacrificed to intensity, and with reason. Everything in it tends to one centre, every thought is subordinated to the one meaning, and that meaning is profaned by no impertinences, and broken by no other intrusive emotion. There is a certain majesty, even in its brevity and highly-concentrated passion. In its own style it would be difficult to surpass this fine study; and we are quite ready to admit with Mr Morley "that there is in these limits of construction a concentration and regularity, and in those too condemned Alexandrines a just and swelling cadence, that confer a high degree of pleasure of the highest kind."

By what trick of opinion it was, however, that the tragedies of Voltaire were supposed to be irreligious or polemically anti-Christian, it is very difficult to imagine. The play of 'Mahomet,' as we have said, takes the very lowest view of the prophet's character. It represents him to us as a conscious impostor, taking advantage of the follies of men, and telling his confidant that he does so in the most straightforward way. "In presenting the founder of one great religion in this odious shape, he was doubtless suggesting that the same account might be true of the founder of another," Mr Morley says, but without in reality the least ground for saying so, since Voltaire's age had not arrived at the refinement of slumping all religions together, and to treat the prophet of Mecca as an impostor, was a most usual and not at all impious assumption on the face of it. In short, the piece would seem to have been condemned by the simple name of its author, if not by some private cabal concerned about other interests than those of religion. Voltaire sent it to Pope Benedict XIV., who re-

ceived it graciously, and sent him a medal in return. "Crepillon," says Condorcet, "was more scrupulous than the Pope;" but it may be doubted whether he was moved by religious motives. In the drama of 'Alzire,' on the other hand, Voltaire is absolutely Christian. He introduces not only in Alvarés, an aged Christian philosopher, but in Gusman, his son, a man in the height of life and passion, murdered by his rival on his wedding-day, a virtue which is almost inconceivable in its perfection. And this is not, as Condorcet says, "virtue perfected by reason," but virtue profoundly and almost ostentatiously Christian. Gusman, who is dying, who is aware that he has been killed out of jealousy as well as patriotism, and that his bride loves his slayer, addresses the assassin in the following words :—

"Vis, superbe ennemi, sois libre et te
souvien
Quel est le devoir, et la mort d'un
Chretien.

Des dieux que nous servons, connois la
différence,
Les tiens t'ont commandé le meurtre et la
vengeance,
Et le mien, quand ton bras vient de
m'assassiner,
M'ordonne de te plaindre et de te par-
donner."

Nothing can be more edifying than these sentiments; and one would have supposed them capable of covering a multitude of sins. But it does not appear that it was so. Voltaire, indeed, was not the sort of man to be let off. His contempt and scorn were at once so clear and so extreme, his want of comprehension of his adversary's possible honesty or better meaning so complete, that the offence of every one who took the opposite side was mingled with and increased by a thousand personal irritations. He spared nobody, except indeed

those who came to him weeping and craved his mercy, whom he was always ready to befriend. A hand so prompt against every man naturally found a constant band of opponents equally prompt. And thus in storm and feud, in bustle and business, in continual movement and warfare, his life slipped slowly away—a life without any very great events in it, which seems endless in its long expanse of more than eighty years. In this its middle interval he attained what is the crown of distinction to a Frenchman—a place in the Academy—an honour which he had previously sought in vain. This was done chiefly by Court favour, Madame de Pompadour having drawn upon the poet a certain gleam of recognition from those heavens of which she held the key. She employed him to compose a comedy in celebration of the marriage of the Dauphin—an insignificant piece, which, however, procured for him the post of gentleman of the bedchamber, and the title of historiographer of France. He recorded his own opinion of this transaction concisely enough as follows :—

"Mon Henri Quatre et ma Zaire,
Et mon Americaine Alzire,
Ne m'ont valu jamais un seul regard du
roi,
J'eus beaucoup d'ennemis avec tres-peu de
gloire,
Les honneurs et les biens pleuvent enfin
sur moi,
Pour une farce de la Foire."

Something more, however, was necessary to open the celestial gates of the Academy. He had to conciliate those enemies against whom it was the work of his life to combat in every possible way. "He was obliged, by way of disarming the *dévots*, to write a letter to Père Latour, in which he declared his respect for religion, and,

what was still more necessary, his attachment to the Jesuits." Condorcet does not hesitate to say, that "no doubt it would have been better to give up the Academy than to write this letter." But such apparently was not the opinion of Voltaire.

In 1749 the Marquise du Châtelet died, and Voltaire lost his domestic circle, his, so to speak, home life. A year later he went to Berlin on the invitation of Frederick—a memorable journey, which all the world has heard of. Never was a more memorable friendship. The greatest king then living, and the man whose literary fame was to that of all his contemporaries, at least on the Continent, as a sea is to the streams that swell it, met apparently upon equal terms, with showers of mutual laudation and mutual worship. "To be lodged in the rooms which had been occupied by the Maréchal de Saxe, to have at my command the King's kitchen when I chose to eat alone, and his carriage when I wanted to go out, these were the smallest of my privileges," says Voltaire himself. "The suppers were very pleasant. I don't know if I deceive myself, but I think there was a great deal of wit amongst us: the King possessed it himself, and encouraged it in others. I worked two hours a-day with his Majesty. I corrected his works, never failing to praise what was good, while I struck out what was worth nothing. I was not called upon for the duties of a courtier. I had no visits to pay, no office to fill. I had an altogether free life, and I could not imagine any position more agreeable." Notwithstanding the agreeable character of this statement, however, there is a keen and sharp anatomy in the narrative of Frederick and his Court, in which it is contained, which no vituperation could exceed. The visitor paints that

lawless, graceless, unattractive Court, in keen, incisive lines, as on a background of flame. A white smile of fierce enjoyment is on his lips, and his pen bites into the page like an etching-needle, as he thus sets his august friend before us. Their sentimentalities and their gibes, how they kissed each other's hands, how the King spoke of throwing away the orange-skin when he had swallowed the juice, and the poet said that he had the King's dirty linen to wash, need not be repeated here; but the whole story is such a mixture of the laughable, the contemptible, and the deplorable, as few records of companionship in this world have ever been. The sweet things these two old satyrs said to each other—the spiteful change of voice when they parted—the gossips, delighted with the office, who carried each new gibe from one to the other—the jealous philosophers who came in to widen the incipient breach—all this is as well known to us as if, which heaven forbid, we had been witnesses of their petty, miserable bickering. The King laughed and encouraged his friend to laugh at poor Maupertuis, then turned round upon Voltaire when he satirised Maupertuis as Dr Akakia, and had his satire burned by the hand of the hangman. Voltaire, with tears of fury and sentiment, sent him back his key and cross—

"Je les reçus avec tendresse,
Je les renvoie avec douleur,
Comme un amant dans sa jalouse ardeur,
Rend le portrait de sa maîtresse,"

the one old fool wrote to the other. The maudlin folly of all this pretended feeling, the paltry squabble as of two old women in a work-house, the genuine and refreshing reality of the spite, which is the only true quality among so much that is false, are as small and poor as they are hideous; and it is scarcely needful to go on to the burlesque of

a state arrest at Frankfort, where Voltaire was kept in prison till he restored a certain volume of *poeshe du roi mon maitre*—blessed Germanism, which permits him a shrill shriek of infuriated laughter as he closes his pillory-sketch of his royal friend. This is the best-known episode in his life; and it is unnecessary for us to dwell upon it. It is equally unfavourable to both the personages involved. They had their points of greatness; but in this encounter any two old scolding, swearing, superannuated lackeys—any pair of gossips in a village, making hypocritical pretences of love, and stabbing at each other in the dark—would present as dignified an appearance to the world.

After this period of gilded servitude Voltaire kept his liberty, and risked himself in no new connection, except, indeed, in that domestic bondage imposed upon him by Madame Denis, his niece, which was at least voluntary and natural. It was now that, finding no warm response to his project of settling in Paris, he established himself at Ferney, where the end of his life was passed. He had always been fond of the country, a peculiarity not common at his period; and when he had settled down in this distant corner, he began to make of himself a sort of refuge for the destitute and universal champion of the oppressed—a curious but amiable fancy. It is perhaps wrong to attribute any motive to Voltaire in his assumption of this office beyond his natural inclination to do good, and the humanity and benevolence of a mind henceforward set more or less free from the engrossing occupations of a more active age. "Should it be objected that love of reputation entered largely into these proceedings," says Mr Carlyle—not too favourable a critic—"Voltaire can afford a handsome

deduction on that head; should the uncharitable even calculate that love of reputation was the sole motive, we can only remind them that love of *such* reputation is itself the effect of a social, humane disposition, and wish, as an immense improvement, that all men were animated by it." There is, however, a sort of official character in the way he sets himself up as the protector specially of the persecuted, interfering as an independent prince might, in cases such as that of Calas, a Protestant, executed on a false accusation for murdering a son who was about to turn Catholic; of Sirven, obliged to fly before a similar imputation; of La Barre, accused of having profaned a cross, &c.—which is something more than spontaneous kindness. It was as good a way as another, perhaps the best way, of holding Superstition up to the world as an instrument of all atrocity. In respect to the case of Calas, he is reported to have said, with an exaggeration in which it is difficult not to see a certain conscious mockery, that he could not forgive himself had he ever smiled until he had obtained her rights for the unfortunate widow whose husband had been legally murdered. But notwithstanding the political motive which is apparent, and the *pose* of champion which is not altogether blamable, there is a large reserve of true charitableness and goodness of heart left behind. He was a remorseless mocker and a critic full of cruel levity; but the moment that any one appealed to him or threw himself on his mercy, some marvellous mixture of pleased vanity along with natural kindness, made Voltaire at once that man's champion and supporter. He did a great deal of good at Ferney; he interested himself for the welfare of the country; he cultivated a village, and did his best to benefit his neighbours gene-

rally; he even built a church, and was *bon seigneur*, making himself popular with the poor. And all the while he was the correspondent of kings and emperors, the great man for whom France was preparing such an ovation as she has never offered to any other man of his profession—the philosopher *par excellence* of a philosophical age. No doubt, he pleased himself in the multiplicity of his attributes, and was delighted to recognise the width and extended sympathies of his own being; one hour toiling for the exculpation of a supposed criminal; another, directing an intellectual assault upon the documents of religion, and destroying its proofs; another, writing to Catherine of Russia or the great Frederick. How great he must have felt himself in all these varieties! how manifold and full of many interests! There was no end to the things he could do, and no limit to the excellence of his work, whatever it might be. From destroying the Christian religion down to turning a witty sentence or polishing a verse, he felt himself equal for all.

His stories 'Candide,' 'Zadig,' 'L'Ingénu,' and the rest, would seem to have been produced in this most peaceful portion of his life. These books are the very perfection of cleverness. They are full, not so much of wit, as of derisive mockery, sometimes trenchant, sometimes gentle enough, but always mockery. Their usual subject is the weakness, the folly, the contradictoriness of man. There is no result apparently hoped for, no change thought possible, and yet they are not melancholy productions, but quite cheerful and light-hearted, as if misery, like everything else, was a joke, and the world too ridiculous for anything but laughter. It is impossible even to write such words as these without implying that there is something tragical at

the bottom of the laughter, but there is no trace that Voltaire felt this. He laughs, or rather grins, quite freely at all that can possibly happen, and leaves Candide making the best of it at the end of his tremendous career, without any attempt to mend matters, or apparent feeling that they ought to be mended. His heroes and heroines are mere puppets to him, at whom he laughs without caring what may happen. That harm should happen was only natural, but it was no fault of his. This is the curious position he assumes, and it is part of his entire philosophy—which never troubles itself about any result whatever, nor cares a straw what is to become of the world. He is free to destroy, but it never occurs to him to substitute anything for what he has destroyed. He himself wants nothing more, and why should any one else? It is in his stories that this aspect of his mind comes out most strongly, for it is so easy in a story to make everything go well, and put matters straight for the sufferer. He does this on the stage with a true sense of the necessities of that species of composition, but the *Contes* were free from the sway of the unities, and from those dramatic laws which demand a distinct conclusion and balance of parts; and here he gives scope to his natural turn of mind. Many adventures, many lessons hardly learned, many losses and sufferings, and nothing either mastered or gained in the end. This is the fashion of the bubble which he throws up to show what he thinks of real life. What a ridiculous jumble it all is! he seems to say—what egregious pretences, what absurd mock gravity and solemn farcing! The absurdity makes him grin in derision. It gives him a certain pleasure to see how all the world make fools of themselves; but that is all: he requires no outlet out of

this chaos, and offers none to his readers. For his part, he finds it amusing, and what can any one want more?

The last episode of triumph in his life is as well known as the Berlin chapter. It was in the year 1778 that he made his last famous visit to Paris. All was still peace in that fated city, though the tempests were gathering fast and dark. The whole population rose to welcome the old man, now over eighty, who was in his way a historical monument as well as an author more concerned in their education and training than any other living man. The living generation which thus arose and worshipped had been born and grown up under Voltaire's reign. Perhaps of all the Parisian crowds there were only a few shaky old men remaining like himself who knew that he had grown into reputation like others, and had not been born upon that pedestal which he had occupied for more than a lifetime. To the mass he had always been as a god, applauded or reviled, an object of enthusiasm or terror. All Paris filled the streets, crowded under his window, stood for hours waiting to see him pass. They pressed even into his rooms, princes and great people penetrating there, while the small people had to keep outside. At the theatre he had a characteristic ovation; his last tragedy, 'Irene,' was played with an applause more directed to him than to it; and at the conclusion of the performance a grand spectacle was prepared on the stage, where all the actors surrounded and crowned his bust, some of them kissing it with wild enthusiasm, amid the frantic applauses of the people. A kind of hymn of adoration was addressed to him while the ceremony was going on:—

"Aux yeux de Paris enchanté,
Reçois en ce jour un hommage ;

Que confirmera d'âge en âge
La sévère postérité.
Non, tu n'a pas besoin d'atteindre le-
noir rivage,
Pour jouir les honneurs de l'immor-
talité!"

Going out from this intoxicating scene, the crowd opened to his feeble passage, leaving only room for him to pass. "Each disputed the honour of sustaining him a moment on the stair; every step afforded him a new arm to lean on; and no one was allowed to arrogate the right of supporting him too long." The crowd followed him home, shouting "Vive Voltaire! vive La Henriade! vive Mahomet! vive La Pucelle!" kissing and tearing, when they could manage it, shreds of his dress and the fur with which it was trimmed. "On veut me faire mourir du plaisir!" he cried. Another triumph was prepared for him at the Academy, where his portrait had been hung up above the seat of the Director, into which he was voted by acclamation. Franklin, philosopher like himself, brought his grandchild that he might receive Voltaire's blessing—a curious scrap of stolid, old-fashioned Anglo-Saxon amid all the finer language. Thus, in a shower of coloured lights, of bouquets, and applauses, the old actor made his bow to the world. Never had any man a more flattering dismissal. It was the best Paris had to give in the way of immortality, and it was freely bestowed.

Two months after he died; by way of making everything comfortable with the Church, he went through the ceremony of confessing and receiving the last sacrament; and so, though not till after a great deal of trouble, got himself quietly buried. A good deal of contumely has been thrown upon a certain poor *curé* of St Sulpice, whose suspicions touching the reality of this late submission were indeed very natural, and

who thought it his duty to have some satisfaction out of the penitent—which really, unless the *curé* believed it a farce like Voltaire, it was his duty to do. Not long before, apparently out of mere *gaieté du cœur*, Voltaire had made a solemn communion at Ferney, and had even carried his grotesque joking so far as to ask for the appointment of temporal father to the order of Capucins, in the district of Gex—which bewildered Rome gave him. It was a farce to him, from beginning to end, this matter of religion, on which men in general kept up such a pother. It was easy to go through any ridiculous ceremonies that might be necessary when such child's-play was of any practical use. Nothing could more clearly exhibit the great and strange want in Voltaire's nature, his incapacity to understand what is meant by religion, than this very fact. He could not so much as realise that anything which was to him so false and foolish, could to another be the profoundest of truths. This deficiency gave him the power, as we have already said, in one way, for it freed him from all scruples, and gave him the confidence of thorough conviction on his side. But it made him feeble on another. And Mr Morley has most clearly, and with much eloquence and generous feeling, set forth this feebleness. The following passage, in which he indicates, at once forcibly and gracefully, how and why it is that men, even of Voltaire's way of thinking in many important matters, find deeper sympathies and higher arguments in the writings of his adversaries, will give the reader an excellent idea of the nice insight—insight not always recognisable in the rest of the book—with which he treats this part of his subject:—

“This failure to rise to the highest ideas involved in the great debate ex-

plains, along with much besides, two striking facts connected with it. It explains the intense acerbity of the conflict, and the flaming depth of the chasm which divided and divides the two camps in France. For the best natures are most violently irritated and outraged by mocking and satiric attack upon the minor details, the accidents, the outside of the objects of faith, when they would have been affected in a very different way by a contrast between the loftiest parts of their own belief and the loftiest parts of some other belief. Many persons who would listen to a grave attack on the consistency, reasonableness, and elevation of the currently ascribed attributes of the Godhead with something of the respect due to the profound solemnity of the subject, would turn with deaf and implacable resentment upon one who should make merry over the swine of Gadara.

“The same circumstance, secondly, explains the absence of permanent quality about all that Voltaire wrote upon religion. For instance, men who sympathise with him in his aims and even for their sake forgive him his method, who have long ago struck the tents under which they once found shelter in the land of belief, to whom Catholicism has become as extinct a thing as Mahometanism, even they will turn with better chance of edification to the great masters and teachers of the old faith than to the fiery precursor of the new; and why, if not for the reason that while he dealt mainly with the lower religious ideas or with the higher ideas in their lowest forms, they put these into the second place, and move with an inspiring exultation amid the loftiest and most general conceptions that fine imagination and a soaring reason could discover among the spiritual treasures of their religion? They turned to the diviner mind and exercised themselves with the weightiest and most universal circumstances of the destiny of mankind. This is what makes their thought and eloquence of perpetual worth, because the circumstances with which they deal are perpetually present, and the elements of life and character to which they appeal perpetually operative. The awful law of death, the impene-

trable secret of the first cause, the fierce play of passion and universal distribution of pain, the momentariness of guilt and eternity of remorse, the anguish of bereavement that chokes and rends, the hopeless inner desolation which is the unbroken lot of myriads of the forlorn of the earth,—these ghostly things ever laying siege to the soul were known to a Bossuet or a Pascal, and resolved by a series of ideas about the unknowable power and the government of the world, which are no longer the mighty weapons of exorcism they once were, but they are at any rate of due magnitude and proportion, sublime, solemn, never unworthy. We touch the hands of those who have walked with the most high, and they tell us many moving wonders; we look on faces that have shone in rays from the heaven of noble thoughts; we hear solemn and melodious words from men who received answers from oracles that to us are very mute, but the memory of whose power is still upon us. Hence the work of these glowing mortals lives even for those to whom their faith is dead, while the words that Voltaire wrote on religion are lifeless as the Infamous which they so meritoriously slew. As we have said, he never knew the deeper things of Catholicism."

Mr Morley's book will interest those most who know most about his subject; for the ignorant it takes too much for granted; and it can scarcely be desired that it should stimulate the general reader into that immediate study of the works of Voltaire which would be necessary for a full appreciation of the service Mr Morley has rendered him. These works are not for the age: whether we are better or worse than our forefathers, we are at heart different from them. We approach most things from a different point of view, and shape both our loves and our hatreds on different models. This being the case, however, it

is profoundly curious to remember that, notwithstanding all that has come and gone, the unbelief of France still calls itself Voltairism; and that, strangely enough, in a country which has produced many new philosophies of doubt, the children of Voltaire are still spoken of, a kind of children of Israel, a typical tribe representing that great resistance to Christianity which has never yet been overcome, as it has never yet overcome the great antagonist whom it has so often promised to slay. That this should be the case, and that in spite of all the better lights philosophy has gotten since, the most unspiritual, immoral, and irreligious movement which ever erected itself against the Christian faith, should be the one which has had the most success and lasted the longest, is a fact at once most remarkable and most instructive, demanding serious consideration at once from assailants and defenders. We have neither the time nor the skill to discuss so large a question; neither, for us who are on the side of what Voltaire called Superstition, does it so much matter. But to the other side, to the new champions who hope like him, though probably with less confidence, to destroy the Christian religion—to the pure Positivist, the gentle Comtist, the worshipper of humanity, this thought, it seems to us, must be somewhat appalling. His mocking spirit is not more congenial to their reverential frame of mind than to ours, and his morality is as objectionable. On this side of the field we do not much need to concern ourselves about the matter, but to them it cannot be an agreeable thought.

THE MAID OF SKER.—PART VIII.

CHAPTER XLII.—THE LITTLE MAID, AND THE MIDSHIPMAN.

In this sad predicament, I looked from one to other of them, hoping for some counsel. There was Moxy, crying quite as if it were her own child almost; and there was Peggy the milking-maid, allowed to offer her opinion (having had a child, although not authorised to produce one); also myself in uniform, and Black Evan coming up softly, with a newly-discovered walk. And yet not one had a word to say, except "poor little dear!" sometimes; and sometimes, "we must trust in God."

"I tell you," I cried; "that never does. And I never knew good come of it. A man's first place is to trust to himself, and to pray to the Lord to help him. Have you nothing more to say?"

"Here be all her little things," Black Evan whispered to his wife; "put them ready to go with her." His two great hands were full of little odds and ends which she had gathered in her lonely play along the beach, and on the sandhills.

"Is that all that you can do? Watkin could do more than that. And now where is young Watkin?"

They assured me there was no more to do. They were tired of trying everything. As for Watkin, he it was who had brought the mauld lady into the house, and now they had sent him for change of air to an uncle he had at Llynvi. Concerning Delushy, there was nothing for her to do, but to die, and to go to heaven.

"She shan't die, I tell you," I cried out strongly: "you are a set of hopeless ones. Twice have I saved her life before, when I was

only a fisherman. I am a man in authority now; and please God, I am just in time to save her life, once more, my friends. Do you give her up, you stupids?"

They plainly thought that I was gone mad, by reason of my rise in life; and tenfold sure of it they were, when I called for a gown of red Pembrokeshire flannel, belonging to Moxy for ten years now. However poor Moxy herself went for it; and I took the child out of her stuffy bed, and the hot close room containing it, and bore her gently in my arms with the red flannel round her, and was shocked to find how light she was. Down the great staircase I took her, and then feeling her breath still going, and even a stir of her toes as if the life was coming back to her, what did I do but go out of doors, into the bright May sunshine? I held her uncommon and clearly-shaped face on my bosom, to front the sunlight, and her long eyelashes lifted, and her small breast gave three sighs.

"Good-bye all of you," I cried: "she comes away with me this minute. Peggy may come, if she likes, with half a sheep on her back to-morrow."

And so she did: and I could not give her less than half-a-crown for it; because of the difference and the grace of God to darling Bardie. In my arms the whole way home, she lay like a new-born lamb almost, with her breath overcome at first, and heavily drawn, while her eyes were waking. Then as the air of the open heaven found its way to her worn-out lungs, down her quiet eyelids dropped, with a sleepy sense of happiness, and her weak lips

dreamed of smiling, and her infant breast began to rise and fall quite steadily. And so she fell into a great deep sleep, and so I took her to my home, and the air of Newton saved her.

Our Bunny was very good. There could hardly have been any better child, when her victuals were not invaded. She entered into Bardie's condition, and took quite a motherly attitude towards her. And while the tiny one lay so weak, Bunny felt that the lead of mind was hers for the present, and might be established by a vigorous policy. However in this point she was wrong, or at any rate failed to work it out. In a fortnight Bardie was mistress again; and poor Bunny had to trot after her.

Now although it was very pleasant to see the thankfulness of Black Evan, when he came over every day, and brought his pockets full of things, and tried to look pleased when truthful Bardie refused downright to kiss him; pleasant also for me to be begged not only to fish, but even to shoot—perhaps because now the wrong time of year—in and over and through a place, where the mere sight of my hat had been sure to lead to a black eye under it; in despite of all these pleasures, I perceived that business must be thoroughly attended to. And taking this view I was strengthened in my own opinions, by the concurrence of every neighbour possessing a particle of sense. Not only Mother Jones—who might be hard, from so much family—but also the landlord of the Jolly quite agreed with the landlady, and even Crumpy, a man of the utmost tenderness ever known almost, and who must admire children, because he never yet had owned any—all these authorities agreed that I must take care what I was about. For my part, finding their opinions go beyond my own almost, or at any

rate take a form of words different from my own, and having no assurance how it might end, I felt inclined to go back, and give fair-play to both sides of the argument.

But, as often happens when a man desires to see the right, and act strictly up to it, the whole affair was interrupted, and my attention called away by another important matter, and the duties springing out of it. And this came to pass in the following manner. It happened upon Oak-apple morning that I was down on a little sandhill, smoking a pipe, and with both children building houses upon my pumps. These pumps had lovely buckles of the very latest regulation; and it was a pleasure to regard them when at leisure, and reflect upon their quality, as well as signification. The children, however, took this matter from another point of view; and there was scarcely anything to their little minds more delightful than to obscure my pumps with sand, and put up a tower over them. And then if I moved, down came the whole; and instead of themselves, they laughed at me. I had worked very hard in the *Alceste*, and for almost a week after landing found it a most delicious thing, because so incomprehensible, to have nothing whatever to do. But long before now, I was tired of it, and yearned to put on my old slops again, and have a long day of fishing as if Bunny's life and mine hung on it. And when I gave a feast of turbot caught by that excellent Sandy Macraw (and paid for at just what he chose to charge), you would not have guessed it, but such were my feelings, that I only could make believe to eat. And Sandy himself, by special desire, took the foot of the table, and went largely into everything; but behaved uncommonly well, for him.

Now this is just the way I keep on going out of the proper track.

If I could not train a gun, much straighter than I can tell a story, France would have conquered England, I believe, in spite of Nelson. It is the excess of windage, coming down to me from great bards, which prevents my shot from flying point-blank, as it ought to do. Nevertheless the village children loved my style, especially since His Majesty had embellished me. And this was why I shunned the well, and sate among the sandhills; for really it was too hard to be expected to have in throat a new story, never heard before, every time a little pitcher came on the head of a little maid, to be filled, and then to go off again. Bardie and Bunny knew better than that, and never came for stories, till the proper time—the twilight.

Now, as I was longing much to sacrifice all dignity, and throw off gold-lace and blue cloth, and verily go at the congers (which I did the next day, and defied the parish to think what it chose of me), I beheld a pair of horses, with a carriage after them, coming in a lively manner towards my nest of refuge.

"It is useless now," I cried aloud; "I can hope for no more peace. Everybody knows me, or believes it right to know me."

Nevertheless, on the whole, I felt pleased, when I saw that the harness was very bright, and the running-gear knopped with silver. And my amazement was what you may enter into, when really the driver proved to be no bigger than that little Master Rodney Bluett. He had the proper coachman by his side, for fear of accidents; but to me, who had seen so much of horses now in Devonshire, it appeared a most rash thing to allow such a boy to navigate.

However, having caught me thus, he jumped out without accident, while the coachman touched his hat to me, or to His Majesty as now represented by me.

Then that noble boy—as he ought no doubt to be entitled, being the son of a nobleman, although in common parlance styled an honourable boy, which to my mind is no more than a simple contradiction—up he ran with his usual haste, expecting to find only Bunny and me. But his astonishment was worth seeing, on account of his being such a fair young chap, when suddenly he beheld poor Bardie, standing weakly on her legs not quite re-established yet, and in her shy manner of inner doctrine taking observation of him. A more free-and-easy schoolboy there could scarcely be than Rodney; and as for our Bunny, he used to toss her, until her weight overpowered him. But with this little lady looking so pale, and drawn, and delicate, he knew (as if by instinct) that he must begin very gingerly.

"Captain Llewellyn," he said; "I am come to tell you that my mind is quite made up. I mean to go to sea as soon as I can have my clothes made."

"But, young sir," I answered with a wish to humour this fine boy, yet a desire to escape the noble Colonel's anger; "it is useless now to go to sea. There is no war. We must wait, and trust the Lord to send one."

"And how shall I be fit to manage a ship, and fight our enemies, unless I begin at once, and practise, Captain Llewellyn?"

In this there was so much truth, as well as sense of discipline, moreover such fine power of hope for another good bout at the French, that I looked at my pocket-lappets for an answer; and found none.

"I can stand a great deal," he cried; "on account of my age, and so on. But I can't stand Latin and Greek, and I cannot stand being put off always. I know what they want me to do. They want me to grow too old for the Navy! And I do

believe they will manage it. I am getting twelve, every day almost, and I can pull a pair of oars, and fire a cannon nine inches long, and sail a boat, if it doesn't blow."

"For all that I can answer, sir," my words were, being proud of him: "and you know who taught you this, and that. And you know that he always did impress upon your early mind the necessity of stern discipline, and obedience to superiors. Your first duty is to your King and country, in the glorious time of war. But with a wretched peace prevailing, your duty is to the powers placed by Providence to look after you."

"I have heard that till I am sick of it," he answered rather rudely, for I seemed to myself to have put it well: "is that all you can do for me? I had better not have come at all. Look, I have five guineas here, given me yesterday, and all good ones. I will put them just in there—and my word of honour——"

"My boy, if it were fifty, five hundred, or five thousand, would an officer of the Royal Navy think of listening to them? You have hurt my sense of honour."

"I beg your pardon, Captain Llewellyn," he said, hanging down his head: "but you used not to be quite so proud. You used to like five shillings even."

"That is neither here nor there," I answered very loftily, and increasing his confusion: "five shillings honourably earned no man need be ashamed of. But what you have offered me is a bribe, for the low purpose of cheating your good uncle and dear mother. You ought to sink into the sand, sir."

He seemed pretty nearly fit to do so, for I put a stern face on, though all the time I could hardly keep from laughing most good-naturedly; when a little hand went into his, and a little face defied me. Poor

sick Bardie had watched every word, and though unable to understand, she took hot sides with the weaker one.

"E san't sink into 'e sand, I tell 'a, 'e yicked bad old Davy. 'Hot's a done to be 'colderd so! I'se very angy with 'a indeed, to go on so to a gentleyum."

By what instinct could she tell that this was a young gentleman? By the same, I suppose, by which he knew that she was a young lady. And each of them ready to stand up for the other immediately! It made me laugh: and yet it is a sad thing to go into.

"Now, my boy," I began, for fear of losing the upper hand of them; "you are old enough to understand good sense when put before you. It is true enough that if you mean to walk the planks like a sailor, you can hardly begin too soon at the time of life you are come to. I was afloat at half your age, so far as I can remember. But I am bound to lay before you two very serious questions. You will have to meet, and never escape from, every kind of dirt, and hardship, narrowness, and half-starving—not an atom of comfort left, such as you are accustomed to. Danger I will not speak of, because it would only lead you on to it. But the other thing is this: By going to sea, you will for ever grieve and drive out of your prospects not only your good uncle, but perhaps almost your mother."

I thought I had made a most excellent speech, and Bardie looked up with admiration, to know when I meant to finish. But to my surprise, young Rodney took very little heed of it.

"That shows how much you know, old Davy! Why I was come on purpose to tell you that they are tired out at last: and that I may go to sea, if only you will appoint me a place on board of your ship Al-

cestis. Now do, Captain Llewellyn do, and I will never forget it to you, if ever I become a great man."

"My dear boy, I would do it this minute if I had the power. But though they call me 'Captain' here, I am only Captain of a gun, and Instructor of Artillery. And even our Captain himself could not do it. He could only take you as a volunteer, and now there is no call for them. You must get your appointment as midshipman in the regular way from London. And the chances are fifty to one against your joining the *Alcestis*. That is to say, of course, unless you have some special interest."

His countenance fell to the lowest ebb, and great tears stood in his bold blue eyes; but presently the hopeful spirit of youth and brave lineage returned.

"I will write to my brother in London," he said; "he has never done me a good turn yet; perhaps he will begin this time."

Not to be too long about it, either by that or some other influence, he obtained his heart's desire, and was appointed midshipman, with orders to join the *Alcestis*, upon her next appearance off our coast. You should have seen the fuss he made, and his mother too, about his outfit; and even Colonel Lougher could not help being much excited. As for me, I was forced to go to and fro betwixt Newton and Candleston Court every day, and twice a-day, for the purpose of delivering judgment upon every box that came. But when Master Rodney made me toss his spelling-books and grammar at his breast, to practise parrying with his little dirk, I begged him to let me

take them home, as soon as he was tired. I have them now, with his little stabs in them, and they make me almost independent of the school-master in writing.

Not only was I treated so that I need not have bought any food at all—except for Bardie and Bunny—but also employed at a pleasant price to deliver lessons every morning as to the names of sails and ropes and the proper style of handling them. We used to walk down to the hard sea-shore, with a couple of sharp sticks, whenever the tide allowed fair drawing-room. And the two little children enjoyed it almost as much as the rising hero did. The difficulty was to keep the village children, who paid nothing, from taking the benefit of my lecture as much as Midshipman Bluett did. And they might have done so, if they cared to do it, for I like a good large audience; but they always went into playing hopscotch, in among my ropes and yards, when all done beautifully in fine sand, and ready to begin almost—for the proper way is to have a ship spread naked first, and then hoist sail, if you want to show its meaning. I could not bear to be hard upon these young ones—and some of them good mother Jones's own—all in a mess of activity; and I tried to think that it was all right, because money was earning anyhow. But I could not reconcile it with my sense of duty to make a game of well-paid work; therefore I kept the children out, in a manner I need not now describe, only you may rely upon it for real ingenuity; for children are worse to manage than folk who have been through having them.

CHAPTER XLIII.—A FINE PRICE FOR BARDIE.

Now our own two little darlings had behaved so beautifully, gazing

at the bad works of the others from a distance only, though sadly pushed

to share in them, and keeping their little garters up, when the others were hopscoching; also feeling, and pointing out, and almost exaggerating the ruin wrought by the other small ones (which they durst not come down to help), that I determined to give them both a magnificent Sunday dinner. I would gladly have had the young midshipman down—for on Sunday he was such an ornament, as good as the best church-window!—but now our time was almost up; and though his mother would have let him come to grace my humble cottage, the Colonel insisted that he must go to take farewell of some excellent aunts, from whom he had large expectations, and who had ordered him up for the Sunday to the neighbourhood of Cardiff. However, we could get on very well with our own aristocracy only, which I was sure poor Bardie was, though without any aunts to dine her, and it only made me the more determined to have a family party fed on good fare. We envied nobody as we sate down, and the little ones put up both hands, according to some ancient teaching. For the first course we had conger, baked; a most nourishing, excellent dish, full of jelly and things for children. And this one was stuffed, like a loaded cannon, with meat-balls, pork fat, and carraways. Bunny went at him as if she had never secured such a chance in her life before, but Bardie seemed inclined to wait for what was coming afterwards, and spent the time in watching Bunny with admiration and contempt mixed, as they are on a child's face only.

Then I brought in the dish of the day, with Bunny skipping and going about, and scorching her fingers to help me; but Bardie (having gone into her grandeur) sitting at table steadfastly, and with a resolute mind to know what it was before approval.

She had the most delicate nostrils, but what I brought made her open them. Because I had the very best half of the very best ham ever cured in our parish, through a whole series of good-luck. Luck, and skill, and the will of the Lord, must all combine for a first-rate ham; and here they were met, and no mistake, both by one another and by excellent cooking afterwards. It would not become me to say any more, when it comes to my mind that the delicate gold of infant cabbage, by side of it, was also of my own planting, in a bit of black mould in a choice niche, ere Bethel Jose had tempted me. In spite of all this wonderful cheer, and the little ones going on famously, the sight of that young cabbage struck a vein of sorrow somewhere. To go away, and leave my house and garden for whole years perhaps, and feel that it was all behind me, in neglect and loneliness, with no one to undo the windows, or to sow a row of peas, or even dib a cabbage in, and perhaps myself to find no chance of coming back to it, and none to feel the difference! Like a knife all this went through me; so that I must look upward quite, for fear of the little ones watching me.

Those two little creatures ate with a power and a heartiness enough to make anybody rejoice in the harmless glory of feeding them. After the very first taste, they never stopped to wipe their lips, or to consider anything, but dealt with what they had won, and felt, and thoroughly entered into it. Only every now and then they could not help admiring what I take to be the surest proof of a fine ham and good cookery, that is to say, bright stripes of scarlet in between fat of a clear French white, not unlike our streaky jaspers interlaid with agate. To see that little thing, who scarce could lift a finger three weeks ago, now

playing so brisk a knife and fork, filled me with gratitude and joy, so that I made up my mind to finish my dinner from the conger, and keep the rest of the ham for her.

I gave the little souls their wine—as they called it—of gooseberry-water, a good egg-cup full apiece; and away they went, like two little women, into the garden to play with it, and see who would keep it the longest. Then I put the rest of the ham in the cupboard, and returning to the conger, began to enjoy the carver's privilege of ten minutes for his own fork. But just as I had done handsomely well, and was now preparing to think about a pipe of fine Navy tobacco, and a small nip of old rum and water, suddenly my door was darkened, and there stood the very last man (save one) whom, for my comfort and calm Sabbath feeling, I could ever have wished to see.

"Peace be to this house," he began, with his hands spread out, and his eyes turned up, but his nostrils taking sniff of things: "peace be to this humble home, and the perishing flesh contained in it! Brother Davy, is it well with thee?"

"Brother Hezekiah," said I, perceiving what he was up to: "no flesh does this house contain; for that it is too humble. But in the name of the Lord, right welcome art thou to cold conger! Brother, I pray thee, arise and eat; and go forty days hence on the strength of it."

"It hath been done," replied Hezekiah, "by Divine grace and unceasing prayer. But come, old chap, I am sure you have got something better in that cupboard. Stinking fish hast thou often sold me, and lo I have striven to like it! therefore give me good meat now, and let us rejoice at thy great doings."

This speech was so full of truth that it got the upper hand of me, both by the sense of compunction

and the strength of hospitality, and I could no longer deny to Perkins all that remained of poor Bardie's ham. "I have expounded the word of the Lord, I have been as Lot in your little Zoar," he cried, going on for the third help of ham; "my spirit was mighty within me, David; and Hepzibah took up the wondrous tale. Backsliding brother, where hast thou been? There is a movement and revival set afoot from my burning words and Hepzibah's prophecies, such as shall make your rotten old Church——"

"Have a drop of beer," I said, for I did not like to see him shake his fist at our church-tower.

"Well, I don't mind if I do," he answered, "now I come to think of it. Everything in its season, brother. And a drop of your old rum afterwards."

I pretended not to hear this last; for though I might stand him in twopenny ale, I saw no reason for spoiling the tops of a bottle or two that I scorned to open, even when my rheumatics had leapt from my double half-ribs to my ear-drops. So, after observing that things were locked up, I ran into the Jolly, and fetched a pint of small ale, very rapidly. Not expecting me back so soon, he had made a good round, with his knife in his hand, to see what might be hoped for. Now back he came with a groan, and said that he knew not what he was fit for. When the power of the Word came upon him, he had such spasms afterwards.

I never love to be in company with a man of this sort. When my time is come for thanking God for a fine dinner, I would rather be alongside of a simple man and a stupid one, who can sit and think with me, and say no more about it. He knew my feelings, I do believe, and enjoyed them like pickles with his meat; and after finishing every

morsel, even down to the mark of the saw upon the very knuck of it, up he put his tallowy thumbs with the black nails outwards, and drew a long breath, and delivered, "In the name of the Lord, Amen. And now, Brother David, rejoice a little, as behoves a Christian man, upon the blessed Sabbath-day."

"Hezekiah, I have rejoiced to behold your joy in feeding, and to minister thereto. Now, having fruition of fleshly things, take the word of the Lord, oh my brother, and expound doctrinally; though it be but a score of chapters. I will smoke, and hearken thee."

"Strong meat is not for babes, my son; and a babe art thou, old Dyo. Chape like you must wait and watch for the times of edification. There is a time for sowing, and there is a time for reaping. Small ale is not meat for such as bear the burden of the day."

"'Kiah, the smith," I asked, very shortly, "what is it you would have of me?"

"Brother Davy, I have offered a blessing on thy flesh-pots; and good they were, though not manifold. It is comely that I should offer another blessing on thy vessels, Davy."

What could I do with such a man in my own house? Brother Hezekiah became, at my expense, most hospitable. I found no escape from my own bottle, without being rude to my visitor's glass; and yet I enjoyed not a single drop, for want of real companionship. For all my wits were up in arms, as if against Parson Chowne almost; because I knew that Master Perkins wanted to make a fool of me. So I feigned to be half-seas-over, that he might think he had done it.

"Ancient friend," he began at last, when he thought that I was ripe for it; "thou hast lifted me above the height of edification.

Peradventure I say words that savour not of wisdom, beloved brother, the fault is thine: here I am, and there you are."

"How can any man having a smithy of his own go on so? An thou wert not tipsy, 'Kiah, thou couldst see the contrary. I am here, and thou art there."

"Just so. You have put it wonderfully," he answered, after thinking: "we may both say right is right, which is the end of everything. Keziah said to me, 'Go seek where he is, and how he is; because I have seen noble visions of his exaltation.' And yet, you see, exalted brother, scarce the tenth part came to her."

"She knows what she is about," said I; "she dreamed of a red-hot cradle, and the hoof of Satan rocking me. Now I see the whole of it. It was Parson Chowne, and the ferry-boat, and the ketch I was all but burned in. Perkins, tell me more, my friend. I have groaned much for neglecting the warning of the prophetess."

"How many men have groaned in vain for that same cause, old Dyo! Vainglorious males, they doubt her gift, because she is a female! Out of the mouths of babes and women—brother, I forget the passage, but it comes to that, I think. And now she hath been again in trouble."

"Concerning what, old Hezekiah? As concerning what, I pray thee?"

"Even touching the child Delushy, in the godless house of Sker. In a holy trance it hath been vouchsafed her to behold that poor kild of the flock bearing in her mouth a paper, whereupon in letters of blood was written, 'Come over, and help us.' And we have found a way to help her, with thy faithful testimony."

In his crafty sheep's-eyed manner, made of crawling piety mixed with

sharp and spiteful worldliness, he began to feel my soundings towards a scheme so low and infamous, that my blood within me boiled for being forced to bear with him. He had prepared the whole plot well, and what it came to was just this: Inland there lived a wealthy smelter of the Methodist tribe, and Hezekiah was deep in his books for long supply of material. Rees ap Rees was his name, and he longed, as every year he grew older, to make up for an ancient wrong, which was coming home to him. In the early days when he was poor, and clever, and ambitious, he had ousted his elder brother from his father's hearth, and banished him. This poor fellow fled to the colonies; and for many years no token and no news came home of him. Meanwhile Rees ap Rees was growing elderly, and worn out with money, which is a frightful thing to feel. But about a year ago, a half-caste sailor had come to his house, bringing a wretched death-scrawl from this supplanted, but never yet forgotten, and only brother. There were not a dozen lines, but they told a tale that made the rich man weep, and eat dry bread for days and days. His brother having been born without the art of getting on at all, was dying for want of food and comfort, having spent his last penny to keep the mouths of his two little babes at work. These poor children had lost their mother, and were losing their father now, who with his last breath almost, forgetting wrongs, as we do in death, very humbly committed them to the charge of his rich brother. And he said that his only remaining friend, captain of the *Nova Scotia*, had promised to deliver them safe in Bristol, to be sent for. The dying father had no strength to speak of their names, or age, or any other particulars.

Now it so happened that Rees ap Rees was dearly fond of children, as all rich childless people are, on account of being denied them: and since his wife died, he had often thought of adopting some one. But being rich, he was fidgety now; and none of the children in his neighbourhood ever blew their noses. So here he found, as it were from heaven, two little dears coming down upon him, his next of kin and right heirs, and also enabling him to go to his parish churchyard, with a sense of duty done, although preferring to rest elsewhere, if by law allowable. You may suppose how he waited and watched: but those two little dears never came. Upon that, he longed for them so much more that he offered a reward of £100 for any tidings of them, and of £200 for both, or either, brought to his house in safety. Hence it will be clear enough what Hezekiah's scheme was; and half the reward was to be my own.

"All thou hast to say, good Dyo, is what thou saidest at the very time; that the ship was not called *Andalusia*, but to the best of thy belief was more like *Nova Scotia*. Also that she was bound for Bristol, and that the other baby's clothes bore no coronet, as they fancied, but the letter R. done fancifully, as might be by a freemason, such as the poor father was said to be. That garment must be destroyed of course. I have one prepared for the child Delushy, with 'Martha ap Rees' in faint writing upon it. This the old man must find out for himself, after our overlooking it. He will then believe it tenfold. And after the sight of thy uniform, Dyo—ha! how sayest thou, old friend? A snug little sum to invest for old age. Thou knowest the old saying, 'Scurvy in the Navy; but the Navy's self more scurvy!' When thou art discharged with three half-

pence a-day, one hundred pound with accumulations, say £150 then, will help to buy sulphur for thy rheumatics. Myself will give thee ten per cent for it, upon sound security."

"It sounds very well," said I, to lead him; "one hundred and fifty pounds hath a fine sound."

"Not only that, my noble boy: but the hold thou wilt have on a rich young maiden, such as Martha ap Rees will be. The old fellow can't last very long: none of those smelters ever do, and he hath heart-disease as well. Little Martha will come into £20,000 or more, and every penny of it hanging upon thee, and me, my lad. Is it well devised, is it grand, my boy; is it worthy of old 'Kiah?'"

"That it is," I cried; "most worthy!"

He flourished his glass in the pride of his heart, and even began to sing a song with a chorus of "Spankaddilloes," forgetting whose holy day it was. Unfortunately I did the same; for my nature can never resist a song: moreover I wanted to think a little. Not from any desire to dwell for a moment on my own interest, but from the great temptation to make the fortunes of our poor castaway. But while I was nursing my left knee, with the foot giving time for another chorus (which was just beginning), I heard a tiny pipe, and turned round, and there was the little thing herself, dancing on one foot, and jerking the other in mockery of my attitude, nodding her head to keep time as well, and for her very life singing out, "Pankyddillo, dillo, dillo," while Bunny peeping round the door-post, with a power of Sabbath feeling, looked as if the world were ending. It was clear that Bardie had not seen Perkins, whom she never could endure, else would she not have run in from

the garden, to bear a share in our melody; and that good brother was so full of his noble scheme, and his song, and my rum, that he never noticed her baby voice; and her quick light figure was out of his sight, from the corner of his boozing. Therefore I managed to get her away, and send her for a good walk with Bunny, to look for water-cress at Bruwys Well; for I thought it wiser to keep that Perkins ignorant of her whereabouts; and Bunny could be trusted now to see to any one anywhere.

Off went the heavy one very gravely, and the light one full of antics, even in front of the cottages singing "Pankyddillo" (which hit her fancy), so that I feared some disrepute, at such a thing going forth from our house upon a Sabbath evening. I tried to frown, but she made me laugh by turning round and clapping her knee, exactly as she had seen me do; and it seemed the best thing to go back out of sight, ere neighbours got the key to it. Little she guessed that the fate of her life was dancing in the balance, and that her own lightsome play had turned it, whether for good or evil.

How could I let such a spring of life, such a mischievous innocence, and thoroughly earnest devotion to play, sink and be quenched by a formal old Methodist in the iron district? Sker-house was dull enough for dry bones: but there at least she had the sands, and sea, and shells, and rabbits, and wild-fowl: nor any one to terrify her with religious terrors—which to the young are worst of all—unless it were a ghost or two of wicked abbots repenting. Whereas I knew what an old compunctious Methodist is, who has made some money, and devotes his last years to "the service of Jehovah." Even £20,000 could not make it up to her.

Therefore I shook Master Perkins up, for he really had been a little too free, and was going to sleep with his spectacles stuck for a corkscrew into another bottle, and I made him understand that his plan was a great deal too crooked for me, and that the sooner he went to seek Hepzibah (who was prophesying on a stool for pickling pork, down at Betsy Matthew's), and to prepare for his midnight service, with a strong Revival rising, the better chance he would have of escaping my now rapidly-growing desire to afford him total immersion (which is the only salvation of one highly respectable lot of them) in the well of John the Baptist. Hezekiah dreaded water so much that this hint was enough for him; and off he set in a tipsy shamble, to lie down on the sandhills, ere he came face to face with the prophetess. When I had put things a little aright, and brushed up the hearth to a bit of fire (to warm the milk for the little ones), and by opening doors and windows sweetened all the place with summer flowing in and nestling round the relics of the sunset, and when the neighbours' chairs (whereon the very old men had been sitting for their Sunday evening) creaked, as if carried in and dusted for another Sunday, and there was not one child left (except

a bad child by the well, whose loose mind was astray with stars, and took no heed of supper-time), then the two best children in the village, neighbourhood, or county, hand-in-hand came to my door. They were wonderfully silent, and they stole (each in her own manner) just a little glimpse at me, to feel how my temper lay; then they looked at one another, to exchange opinions on that all-important matter. They knew they had been out too late, and had frightened Granny a little perhaps, and therefore now had angered him. And in their simple way, they thought it wiser not to broach the question. I meant to scold them, but could not find it, when I beheld their pretty ways, within my power to do so. And lucky for them that I did not know, until next day, when too late to scold, what a dreadful mess their clothes were in. In that light I could only see their pretty faces glowing, and their bright eyes full of doubt, and their little bodies shrinking back. Also bundles of water-cress put forward to mitigate righteous wrath. I felt that I had been having my spree, and these small creatures had only had theirs. So I kissed them both, and gave them good supper, and blessed them into their little bed.

CHAPTER XLIV.—PROVIDES FOR EDUCATION.

Having before me several years of absence from home, if it should please the Lord so long to spare me, I now took measures for the welfare of those who would chiefly miss me. The little cottage was my own from many generations, and in a new will made by a clever man (no less than our new schoolmaster), I left it to Bunny, and all my effects, except my boat, and the sum of ten guineas,

which two items, as honour demanded, were for Miss Delushy. But what is wealth without education? No more than a plummet without the line. Knowing this, I provided as follows.

A thoroughly fine new schoolmaster had arisen, as aforesaid, for the purpose of educating all our Newton children. Our good parson had brought him in, not because

the old one, being challenged by the village tailor to spell the word "horse" without the picture, proved his command of the alphabet by accomplishing it in nine different ways, all wrong (for that was entered to his credit, when the tailor failed to do the like), but because he horsed a boy and left him there for the afternoon, having fallen asleep without thrashing him. And it shows what the public confusion of mind is, that there were not three people in all the parish who could help jumbling these stories together, because each of them had a horse in it! However the poor old man had to go, and Colonel Lougher, having nothing to do with the spelling of the children, thought it so hard on his brother's part, that he made the old man his head-gardener, so as to double his wages, and enable him to sleep not half, but the whole of the afternoon.

His successor in the school had been sought out very diligently, and he could spell almost as well as Bardie could pronounce a word. But when we found that he came from a distance more than a quick man could walk in a day, and that he could not through all his forefathers (although they were quite at his finger-ends) claim so much even as intermarriage with any of our third-rate families, much less with any Llewellyns, or Hopkins, or Bevans, or even Thomases, we saw that even Parson Lougher had gone a little too far for us, and not a woman in the place would let a bedroom to that man. However we could not bolt him out of his own schoolroom, and there he slept, contented with a pile of slates for bedstead, and of copy-books for bolster and for pillow. For a week at least he had no school, but he went to church and sang beautifully (which brought half the women over), and the children began

to be such a plague, at home, before Monday morning, that eight or nine were sent back to school, as if with halters round their necks. With these he took so much kind trouble, that in three hours they learned more than the parish had learned for a generation; so much that they could not keep it down when they went home for dinner. In the afternoon there were twenty pupils, and by the end of the week three dozen. But how could they prove him to their parents qualified for a bedroom?

Upon the strength of my present position, and unrivalled experience, I found it my duty to come to the fore, and take the command of the householders. And knowing of course what a waste of time it is to reason with anybody, I seized the bull by the horns, and offered Master Roger Berkrolles the occupancy of my cottage upon most liberal conditions. "That is to say for rent per quarter, one sea-snail, and per annum one cockleshell, to preserve the title; provided nevertheless and upon this express condition that my lawful granddaughter Bunny should be fed, alimanted, sufficiently nourished, clothed, clad, apparelled, and in garments found; also taught, instructed, indoctrined, educated and perfected in every branch of useful knowledge by the said Roger Berkrolles. Item, that if a certain child of tender years, known as 'Delushy,' should at any time appear on the premises, and demand instruction, instruction of the highest order, and three slices of bread-and-butter, should be imparted to her without charge, *de die in diem*." I objected to these "dies," as being of a nasty churchyard sound; but Master Roger convinced me soon, and must have convinced a far tougher fellow, that to put our latter end out of sight and out of mind, so, is a bad example and discourage-

ment for the young ones, whose place it is to dwell on it.

A man of far coarser tone of mind than mine would be required to describe Master Roger's sense of gratitude towards me. When I do a handsome thing, I cannot bear to tell of it, nor even to receive the praise accruing from what neighbours know. "Do it, and be done with it," in all such cases is my rule; and if Roger chose to give me an inventory of goods and chattels, he can bear me out in saying that I scorned to call a witness in to put his name to it. Business is not my strong point, and it never is with a man of largeness.

The next thing for me to see to was to get some wicked warrants quashed; which a deep ignorance of my character, and the lies of very low villains, had induced some weak or vicious magistrates to issue; so that in the sporting season (when I might have done my best), I was forced to decamp with my telescope. This has been mentioned perhaps before; but not my strong resolution to face it out, as soon as ever the sense of a strong position enabled me. No doubt they had meant to do their duty; and I forgave them all altogether. There were three of them. Two names I quite forget. How can one think of such trifles at sea? But the third was one Master Anthony Stew, who had tyrannised over me dreadfully, in the times of my tribulation. Up to this man's gate I went, and rang the great bell, with my three stripes on, and a cap of fronted tapestry. Squire Anthony was about, somewhere on the premises, would my honour mind waiting while the boy went round to look for him? This maid never guessed how often she had told me my fish was bad, and what a shame it was to make them eat it up in the kitchen, or starve; and where

did I hope to go to? Neither did she recollect how she had as good as made me kiss her behind the meat-screen, when my glory began to grow for saving those drowned niggers. And yet I could not be sure that she did not know it all, and hide it all, for the joy of boasting afterwards. I understand everything, except women.

When I was shown into the drawing-room, and Mrs Stew with a curtsy went out, as if afraid to trust herself in a presence so imposing, I had a great mind to take a nip at some of the rubbish upon the table. The whole of these nick-nacks could never have paid me half what this fellow had cost me in fines, expenses, costs, and so on; without a bit of evidence from any man of character. However, I only looked at them.

When that low Anthony Stew came in, he knew me (before I could speak almost); he gave a quick glance at the table, and then without another word showed me out, in spite of all my uniform, to his dirty little justice-room. With such a man, I should think it wrong to go into his ribaldry: only he said this, at last;

"Davy, thou thief, we will withdraw them, because we cannot execute them; now thou art in Royal Service. Five there are, if I remember. Does your conscience plead to more?"

"My conscience pleads to none, your Worship. Perjured scoundrels all of them. Five was the number, I do believe. Alas! what may we come to?"

"The gallows, Dyo, the gallows, thou rogue! Thou hast had some shavings. But when thy turn comes, good Dyo, I will do thee a good turn, if I can."

"Will your Worship tell me why? I never looked for anything but the flint-edge from your Worship."

"Because thou art the only rogue

I never was a match for. There, go thy way now; go thy way; or I shall be asking thee to dinner."

"Nay, your Worship, God forbid! What food have I had since breakfast-time?" And so I won the last word of him.

After this provision for my good repute, and defiance of magisterial scandal on behalf of Bunny, my next act was one of pure generosity towards an ancient enemy. Poor Sandy Macraw had a very hard fight to maintain himself and his numerous and still increasing family. Sometimes they did not taste so much as a rind of bacon for months together, but lived on barley-bread and dog-fish, or such stuff as he could not sell, with oatmeal cakes for a noble treat every other Sunday. What did I do but impart to him, underdocument drawn by Berkrolles, that licence to fish off and on Sker Point which my courage had well established, with authority to him and covenant by him to attack and scare all poachers; the whole to be void upon my return, if so I should think proper. And not only this, but I put him in funds to replace all his tackle, by enabling him to sell his boat. For I went so far as to lease him my own, at a moderate yearly rental, upon condition that he should keep her in thorough repair and as good as new. And for the further validity (as the lease said) of this agreement, two years' rent became due at once, and was paid from the price of the other boat. My boat went twice as fast as Sandy's, and was far more handy, so that this bargain was fair and generous, and did honour to all concerned.

The next and last thing, before starting, was to provide for poor Bardie herself. For I feared that Hezekiah, or some other unprincipled fellow, might trump up a case, and get hold of her, and sell, or by other means turn into money my little

pet, to the loss of my rights, and perhaps her own undoing. Resolved as I was to stop all chances of villany of that kind, I went direct to Colonel Lougher and to Lady Bluett. Here I made the cleanest breast that ever was scooped out almost. I may declare that I kept in nothing, except about painting the boat, and one or two infinite trifles of that sort, which it would have been a downright impertinence to dwell upon. Nevertheless Colonel Lougher said that some blame might attach to me in spite of all pure intentions.

But Lady Bluett said no, no. She would not hear of it for a moment. The only thing that surprised her was Llewellyn's thorough unselfishness, and chivalrous devotion to a child who was nothing to him. She was a bewitching little dear; no one who saw her could doubt that; still it showed a very soft side to a wonderfully gallant character, when through all modesty it appeared what womanly tenderness there had been. And this proved how entirely right her opinion had been from the very first, and what a mistake the good Colonel had made, in declining to let her even argue.

"My dear Eleanor, my dear Eleanor," cried the Colonel, with his eyes wide open, and his white hand spread to her; "I am surprised to hear you say so. But we cannot go into that question now. Llewellyn begged for my opinion. Yours, my dear (as you have proved), is of course more valuable: still I thought that it was mine——"

"To be sure it was, dear Henry. Yours is what was asked for. My rule is never to interrupt you, but to listen silently."

"To be sure, Eleanor, to be sure! And we always agree in the end, my dear. But so far as I can judge at present, Llewellyn, although with the very best meaning——"

"And a display of the greatest valour. Come, Colonel, even by his own account——"

"Yes, my dear, great valour, no doubt, coupled with very sound discretion. Yet when I come to consider the whole, I really do think that your hero might have entered more fully into these particulars about the boat. Of course, he had no motive, and it was simply an error of judgment——"

"Henry, there was no error at all. What could he do when they would not even listen to him about the name of the ship? If they would not listen about a ship, is it likely they would listen about a boat? And a very small atom of a boat! The thing is too ridiculous."

Perceiving a pause, I made my bow; for the very last thing I could desire would be to sow a controversy between the gentleman and lady, whom of all the county I esteemed the most and loved the best. And I knew that if I caused dissension in a pair so well united, each would think the less of me, when they came to make it up together. Moreover, my object was attained. Their attention was drawn to the child again: the Colonel, as the nearest magistrate, was put in legal charge of her: I was now quit of all concealment: and Lady Bluett had promised to see to the poor thing's education, if ever she should need any.

This I hoped with all my heart that she would do, and quickly too. And indeed she was growing at such a pace after that long illness, also getting so wonderfully clever about almost everything, and full of remarks that might never strike a grown man till he thought of them, that the only way or chance I saw of taking the genius out of her, was to begin her education. Forgetting just now a good deal of my own, and being so full of artillery, I got Master

Berkrolles to make the first start, and show her the way to the alphabet. Our Bunny now could spell "cat" and "dog," and could make a good shot at some other words, and enjoyed a laugh at children (head and shoulders over her) whenever they went amiss, and she from the master's face was sure of it. But Bardie had never been to school; for I thought it below her rank so much; and now I contrived for our great schoolmaster to come to my cottage, and there begin.

It must have made the very gravest man, ever cut from a block of wood, laugh to behold Master Roger, and her. He with his natural dignity, and well-founded sense of learning, and continual craving for a perfect form of discipline; yet unable to conceal his great wonder at her ways: she on her side taking measure of him in a shy glance or two, and letting her long eyelashes fall, and crossing her feet with one shoulder towards him, for him to begin with her. He vowed that he never had such a pupil; instead of learning, she wanted to know the reason why of everything. Why had A two legs and a girdle, while B had two stomachs and no leg at all? C was the moon, from the shape of it. It was no good to tell her that C was the cat; a cat had four legs and C had none: and as for D being a dog, she would fetch dear Dutch, if he would not believe her, and show him what a dog was like. And then perceiving how patient he was, and understanding his goodness, the poor little fatherless soul jumped up on his knee, and demanded a play with him. He did not know how to play very well, because he was an ancient bachelor; but entering into her sad luck, from knowledge of her history, he did the very best thing (as I thought) that ever had been done to her. He put her on a stool between his knees, and

through the gloss of her hair he poured such very beautiful and true stories, that one could almost see her mind (like the bud of a primrose) opening. She pushed up her little hands and tossed her thick hair out of the hearing way, and then, being absorbed in some adventures like her own almost, round she turned and laid her eyes upon his furrowed yet beaming face, and her delicate elbows on his knees, and drank in every word, with sighs, and short breath, and a tear or two.

Although, from one point of view, I did not like to be superseded so, especially in my own department, as might be said, of story-telling, yet I put small feelings away, and

all the jaundice of jealousy. If I were bound to go wherever Government might order me, for the safety of our native land, and with moderate pay accruing, also with a high position, and good hopes of raising it, the least I could do was to thank the Lord for sending those two poor children a man, so wise, and accomplished, and kind-hearted, bound over to look after them. And yet I would almost as lief have committed them into the hands of Mother Jones, who could scarcely vie with me. But they promised never to forget me; and the night before I went away, I carried Bardie back to Sker, and saw that Black Evan was dying.

CHAPTER XLV.—INTRODUCES A REAL HERO.

My orders were to rejoin at Pembroke on the 10th of June, where the *Alcestis* lay refitting, and taking in stores for an ocean-cruise. Of course I was punctual to the day, and carried with me a fine recruit, Master Rodney Bluett. I received not only minute directions from his lady-mother, but also a tidy little salary, to enable me to look after him. This was a lady of noble spirit, and ready to devote her son for the benefit of his country; because there was no fighting now, nor any war in prospect. Also Colonel Lougher came as far as the gate, where the griffins are, and patted his nephew's curly head; and said that although it was not quite as he himself could have wished it, he could trust the boy to be an honour to a loyal family, and to write home every now and then, for the sake of his poor mother. For his own sake also, I think the Colonel might have very truly said; because while he was talking so, and trying to insist on duty, as the one thing needful, I could not for a

moment trust my own eyes to examine him. So we all tried to say "good-bye," as if there was nothing in it.

It was a very long "good-bye," even longer than we could by any stretch have dreamed of. Two or three years was the utmost that we then looked forward to: but I tell you simple truth, in saying that not one of us had the chance of seeing England, much less any part of Wales, for a shorter period than seven years and two months added. You may doubt me, and say "Pooh, pooh! that was your fault;" and so on. But you would be wholly wrong; and from the Admiralty records our Captain could prove it thoroughly. And what is much clearer than all, do you think that Captain Drake Bampfylde would have been seven years, or even seven days, away without sight of his beautiful lady, Isabel Carey, if it could have been managed otherwise?

It was a mixture of bad luck. I can explain a good deal of it, but

not all the ins and outs. We were ordered here, and ordered there, and then sometimes receiving three contradictions of everything. Until we should scarcely have been surprised at receiving signal, "H.M.S. Alcestis to the moon; to wait for orders."

And if we had received that signal, I believe we should have tried it, being by this time the best-trained and finest ship's company in the world. We had ceased to be a receiving ship, as soon as the war was over, and now were what they begin to call — though it sounds against the grain to me — an "Experimental Ship." And the Lord knows that we made experiments enough to drown, or blow up, or blow arms off, every man borne on our blessed books. They placed me at the head of it all, until the others were up to it; and a more uneasy or ticklish time I never have known, before or since. Over and over again I expected to go up to the sky almost; and you may pretty well conceive how frequent was my uneasiness. Nevertheless I still held on; and Government had to pay for it.

In four years' time the old frigate began to be knocked almost to pieces; and we made up our minds to be ordered home, and set our memories at work upon all who were likely to meet us, if still in the land of the living. While at Halifax thinking thus, and looking forward to Christmas-time among our own families, a spick and span new frigate came, of the loveliest lines we had ever seen, and standing-gear the most elegant. She took our eyes so much at once, and she sat the water so, that there was not a man of us able to think of anything else till all hands piped down. This was the *Thetis*, if you please, taken from the *Crappos* in the very last action of the war, a 46-gun frigate, but larger than an English 60-gun ship. The French

shipbuilders are better than ours, but their riggers not to be compared; which is the reason perhaps why they always shoot at our rigging instead of our hulls. At any rate, having been well overhauled, and thoroughly refitted at Chatham, and rigged anew from step to truck, she presented an appearance of most tempting character.

It was a trick of the Naval Board to keep us together, and it succeeded. Those gentlemen knew what we were by this time, the very best ship's company to be found in all the service; and as there were signs already of some mischief brewing, their desire was still to keep together such a piece of discipline. My humble name had been brought forward many times with approval, but without any effect so far upon wages or position. Now, however, my Lords had found it expedient to remember me, and David Llewellyn was appointed master's mate to the *Thetis*, if he should think fit to join her; for the whole after our long service was a matter of volunteering.

There was not a man of us dared to leave Captain Drake Bampfylde shabbily. We turned over to the *Thetis*, in a body, with him; and the crew that had manned her from England took the old *Alcestis* home again. And junior Lieutenant Bluett, now a fine young fellow, walked the quarter-deck of the *Thetis*, so that you should have seen him. But first and foremost was to see our great Captain Drake; as ready as if he were always looking out for an enemy's ship from the foretop. He walked a little lame, on account of the piece the shark took out of him: nevertheless we had not a man to equal him for activity. I remember once when a violent gale caught us on the banks of Newfoundland, and the sky came down upon us black as any thunder-

cloud. The wind grew on us so towards nightfall, that after taking in reef after reef, the orders were to make all snug, send down the top-gallant-masts, and lie-to under close-reefed main-topsail, and fore-top-mast staysail. Captain Drake was himself on deck, as he always was in time of danger, and through the roar of the gale his orders came as clear as a bell almost, from the mouth of his speaking-trumpet. "Main-top men, to station! Close reef the main-topsail. Mr Bluett, clew up, clew up. There is not a moment to lose, my men. Spit to your hands and stick like pitch. What! are you afraid then, all of you!"

For the sail was lashing about like thunder, having broken from the quarter-gasket, and when the men came to the topsail-yard they durst not go upon it. Then a black squall struck them with blinding rain, and they scarce could see one another's faces, till a cheery voice came from the end of the yard, "Hold on, my lads—hold on there! You seem so skeery of this job, I will do it for you." "'Tis the devil himself!" cried old Ben Bower, captain of the main-top; "let him fly, let him fly, my lads!" "It is our Captain," said I, who was coming slowly up to see to it, myself prepared to do the job, and shame all those young fellows; "skulk below, you jelly-pots, and leave it to me and the Captain." "A cheer for the Captain, a cheer for the Captain!" they cried, before I could follow them, and a score of men stood against the sky, in the black pitch of the hurricane, as if it were a review almost. For they guessed what the Captain must have done, and it made a hero of each of them. While they came slowly up the ratlines, he clomb the rigging like a cat, and before they got to the lubber's hole, he was at the topmast-

head, whence he slid down by the topping-lift to the very end of the mainyard. Such a thing done in a furious gale, and the sea going mountains high almost, beat even my experience of what British captains are up to. After that, if he had cried, "Make sail to"—Heligoland, with no landing to it—there was not a man of us but would have touched his hat, and said, "Ay, ay, sir!"

And now we first met Captain Nelson in command of the *Boreas*, a poor little frigate; we could have sunk her as easily as we outsailed her. But as senior to Captain Drake, he at once assumed command of us; although it was not in our instructions to be at his disposal. The Americans then were carrying on with the privileges of British subjects, in trading with the Leeward Islands; although they had cast off our authority in a most uncourteous, and I might say headstrong manner. Captain Nelson could never put up with the presumptuous manners of this race, and he felt bitterly how feeble had been our behaviour to them. These are people who will always lead the whole world, if they can; counting it honour to depart from and get over old ideas. And now they were doing a snug bit of roguery with the Leeward Islands, pretending to have British bottoms, while at bottom Yankees.

Nelson set his face against it; and whenever he set his face, his hand came quickly afterwards. We soon cut up that bit of smuggling, although the Governor of the Islands was himself against us. Captain Nelson's orders were to enforce the Navigation Act; and we did it thoroughly.

Ever so many times I met him, as he now came to and fro; and he took the barge-tiller out of my hand, at least a dozen times, I think. For

he never could bear that another man should seem to do his work for him, any more than he could bear to see a thing done badly. Not that he found fault with my steering (which was better than his own, no doubt), but that he wanted to steer himself. And he never could sit a boat quietly, from his perpetual ups and downs, and longing to do something. He knew my name; he knew every one's name; he called me "Old Dyo," continually, because the men had caught it up; and in my position, I could not perceive what right he had to do so. I had him on my lap, I won't say fifty times, but at least fifteen: for he never had sea-legs at all when a heavy sea was running: and I never thought it any honour, but cherished some hopes of a shilling, or so. As for appearance, at first sight he struck me as rather grotesque-looking than imposing, in spite of his full-laced uniform, and the broad flaps of his waistcoat. His hair, moreover, was drawn away from his forehead, and tied in a lanky tail, leaving exposed, in all its force, rather a sad face, pale and thin, and with the nose somewhat lop-sided. Also the shoulders badly shaped, and the body set up anyhow; and the whole arrangement of his frame nervous, more than muscular.

In spite of all this, any man who knows the faces of men, and their true meaning, could not fail to perceive at once that here was no common mortal. The vigour and spirit of his eyes were such that they not only seemed to be looking through whatever lay before them, but to have distinct perception of a larger distance, and eagerness to deal with it. And the whole expression of his face told of powerful impatience, and a longing for great deeds, dashed with melancholy. The entire crew of his ship, I was told, were

altogether wrapped up in him, and would give their lives for him without thought; and there was not one of them but was mad with our Government for being at peace, and barring Captain Nelson from the exploits he was pining for. One of them struck at me with an oar, when I said how puny Nelson was, compared with our Drake Bampfylde, and only the strong sense of my position enabled me to put up with it. And what I said was all the time the very truest of the true; and that was why it hurt them so. We being now the finest and smartest frigate in the service, looked down upon that tub of a *Boreas*, and her waddle-footed crew, and her pale, pig-tailed commander, with a power of ignominy which they were not pleased with. And all the time we were at their orders, and they took care to let us know it! We would have fought them with pleasure, if the rules of the service allowed it.

Enough of that uncomfortable discontent and soreness. The hardest point is for a very great man to begin to set forth his greatness. We could not, at the moment, see why Horatio Nelson should thus sweep off with the lead so. But after he had once established what he was, and what he meant, there was no more jealousy. To this I shall come in its proper place; I am only now picking up crumbs, as it were, and chewing small jobs honourably.

But against one thing I must guard. Our Captain Drake was never for a moment jealous of Captain Nelson. It was one of the things that annoyed us most, when we looked down on the *Boreas*, and would gladly have had a good turn with those fellows who assumed such airs to us, to find that our beloved Captain was as full of Nelson as the worst of the *Boreasses*. And

one of our men who went on strongly, took six dozen, and no mistake, and acknowledged how well he deserved it. That is the way to do things, and makes all of us one family.

It is time for me now to crowd all sail for Spithead, as we did at last. Seven round years and two months were gone since I had seen old Cymru, and I could fill seven thousand pages with our whole adventures. But none of them bore much on my tale, and nobody cares for my adventures, since I ceased to be young and handsome; and sometimes I almost thought (in spite of all experience) that I had better have gone into matrimony with a young woman of moderate substance. But (as is the case with those things) when I had the chance I scorned it; not being touched in the heart by any one, and so proud of freedom. Moreover, the competition for a man amongst young women may become so lively as to make him bear away large down wind. Exactly what had happened to me in the land of Devonshire.

Three quarters of my pay had been assigned to Roger Berkrolles, under my hand and signature, for the maintenance of our Bunny (so far as the rent might not provide it), and for the general management of things, and then to accumulate. So that, after all, I had not any amazing sum to draw, remembering, too, that from time to time we had our little tastes of it. Nevertheless, when added up, I really was surprised to find that the good clerks thought it worth so much quill-chop over it. And now I had been for several years on the pay of a petty officer (master's mate), and looking forward to be master, if he were good enough to drop off.

He was truly tough, and would never drop off; and I felt it the more because he was ten years my junior, and unseasoned. He drew

half again as much as I did, though he knew that I had done all the work. He gave me two fingers to say good-bye, which is a loathsome trick to me; so I put out my thumb, which was difficult to him: and the next time I saw him, he lay dead in the cockpit of the Goliath.

In a word, I got so little after all my long endeavours to secure the British nation from its many enemies, that verily I must have fallen to the old resource again, and been compelled to ask for alms to help me home in 1790, as had happened to me in the year of grace 1759. We sailors always seem to be going either up or down so much, without seeming to know why. Perhaps it is a custom from our being on the waves so much. However, I was saved from doing such disgrace to the uniform and to my veteran aspect, and the hair by this time as white as snow, simply through the liberality of our Captain Bampfylde. For he made me an offer, both kind and handsome, though not more perhaps than might be expected, after our sailing together so long. This was to take me home with him to Narnton Court, or the neighbourhood, according to how the land might lie, and thence to secure me a passage (which is easy enough in the summer-time) by one of the stone-boats to Newton Nottage. I felt that I might have come home in grander style than this was like to be; and yet it was better than begging my way; and scarcely any man should hope to be landed twice in all his life, at his native village from a man-of-war. Of course, if Master Rodney Bluett had still been with us, he would have seen to my return, and been proud of it; but he had been forced to leave us, having received his appointment as 3d lieutenant to the *Boadicea*, 74.

Therefore I travelled with Captain Drake, and made myself useful

upon the road, finding his coxswain (who came with us in a miserably menial manner) utterly useless, whenever a knowledge of life and the world was demanded. And over and over again, my assistance paid my fare, I am sure of it, whether it were by coach or post. Because the great mass of seamen appear, whenever they come on shore, to enjoy a good cheating more than anything. The reason is clear enough—to wit, that having seen no rogues so long,

they are happy to pay for that pleasure now.

It was said that even the Admiralty had been playing the rogue with us, stopping our letters, and our news, to keep us altogether free from any disturbances of home. At any rate, very few of us had heard a word of England, except from such old papers as we picked up in the colonies. And now, after seven years, how could we tell what to expect, or how much to fear?

CHAPTER XLVI.—AFTER SEVEN YEARS.

From Exeter to Barnstaple, we crowded sail with horses' tails, and a heavy sea of mud leaping and breaking under the forefoot of our coach. Also two boys on the horses, dressed like any admirals, one with horn on his starboard thigh, and the other with jack-boots only. It was my privilege to sit up in the fore-top, as might be, with Coxswain Toms in the mizen-top, and the Captain down in the waist by himself. We made about six knots an hour perhaps; whenever we got jerks enough to keep up the swearing.

But the impatience of our Captain showed how very young he was, now at forty years of age, according to chronology, though nobody would believe it! Surely he might have waited well, after so long waiting; and if he could not chew a quid—which breeds a whole brood of patience—at any rate he had fine pipes, and with common-sense might have kindled them. I handed him down my flint and steel, and my hat to make a job of it; but he shut up the glass, and cried, "More sail!" in a voice that almost frightened me.

It was as dark as main-top-tree holes by the time we got to Barnstaple; but we found no less than

four fine lamps of sperm-oil burning, and tallow-candles here and there, in shops of spirit and enterprise. The horses were stalled, and the baggage housed in a very fine inn, looking up the street, and then the Captain told Toms and me to bouse up our jibs, while he went out. This we were only too glad to do after so much heavy rolling upon *terra firma*, as those landmen love to call it, in spite of all earthquakes, such as killed thirty thousand Italian people, when first I took to the sea again.

But before long, Toms and I began to feel that we had no right to abandon our commander so. Here we were in a town that hardly ever saw a royal sailor, and could not be supposed to know for a moment what his duties were, or even to take a proper pride in seeing him borne harmless. And here was our Captain gone out in the dark, with his cocked-hat on, and his gold-lace shining wherever a tallow candle hung; also with a pleasant walk as if he were full of prize-money; though the Evil One had so patched up a peace that we never clinked a halfpenny.

When old Jerry Toms and my humble self had scarcely gone through three glasses, he said to me,

and I said to him, that we were carrying on too coolly in a hostile town like this. And just at this moment the Navy was down in popular estimation; for such is the public urgency, whenever we are paid for, without being killed or wounded. Therefore Jerry and I were bound to steer with a small helm, and double the watch.

We beat up the enemy's quarters calmly, finding none to challenge us; and then we got tidings of our Captain out upon the Branton road. Jerry was a man of valour, and I could not hang back to be far behind him; and we had been concerned in storming many savage villages. So we stormed this little town, carrying our hangers, and nobody denied us. But before we were half a mile entirely out of hearing, the mayor arose from his supper, and turned out the watch, and beat the drums, and bred such alarm that in one street there were three more people alive ere morning.

Meanwhile Jerry Toms and I shaped our course for the Branton road, and hit it, and held on to it. And, because no man, in strange places, knows what the air may contain for him, Jerry sang a song, and I struck chorus; with such an effect that the cows were frightened all along the hedgerows. This put us quite on our legs again; and a more deeply sober couple could not, or at any rate need not, be seen, than that which myself and Jerry were, after two miles of walking.

In this manner, steering free, yet full of responsibility, we doubled the last point of the road, where it fetches round to Narnton Court. And here we lay to, and held council, out of the tide of the road, and in what seemed to be a lime-kiln.

The coxswain wanted to board the house, and demand our Captain out of it; we had carried all public opinion thus, and the right thing

was to go on with it. But I told him very strongly (so that he put down his collar from his ears to listen) that no doubt he was right enough upon a hundred thousand subjects, yet was gone astray in this. And if we boarded a house at night, after carrying all the town by storm, what ship had we to bear us away from the mayor and his constables to-morrow?

In this dilemma, who should appear but the Captain himself, with his head bowed down, and his walk (which was usually so brisk in spite of a trifling lameness), his very walk expressing that his heart was full of sadness.

"How much longer? How much longer?" he was saying to himself, being so troubled that he did not see us in the shadow there. "My own brother to have sworn it! Will the Lord never hold His hand from scourging and from crushing me? Would that I were shot and shrouded! It is more than I can bear."

In this gloomy vein he passed us; and we looked at one another, daring not to say a word. How could a pair of petty officers think of intruding upon the troubles and private affairs of a post-captain, even though, since our ship was paid off, we could hardly be said to serve under him? "Blow me out of the mouth of a gun," cried Coxswain Toms, in a shaking voice, "if ever I was so amazed before! I would have sworn that our Skipper was not only the handsomest but the happiest man in all the service."

"Then, Jerry, I could have set you to rights. How many times have I hinted that our Skipper had something on his mind, and none of you would hearken me?"

"True for you, my lad. I remember, now you come to speak of it. But we paid no heed; because you looked so devilish knowing, and

would go no further. Old Dyo, I beg your pardon now ; there is good stuff in you, friend Dyo—thoroughly good stuff in you.”

“I should rather think there was,” I replied, perhaps a little drily, for he ought to have known it long ago: “Jerry, I could tell you things that would burst the tar of your pig-tail. Nevertheless, I will abstain, being undervalued so. Ho, shipmate! Haul your wind, and hail! I am blessed if it isn’t old Heaviside!”

Even in the dark, I knew by the walk that it was a seaman, and now my eyes were so accustomed to look out in all sorts of weather, that day or night made little difference to my sense of vision, which (as you may see hereafter) saved a British fleet, unless I do forget to tell of it.

“Heaviside is my name, sir. And I should like to know what yours may be.”

“David Llewellyn.” And so we met ; and I squeezed his hand till he longed to dance ; and I was ready to cut a caper from my depth of feeling.

I introduced him to Jerry Toms, according to strict formality ; and both being versed in the rules of the service, neither would take precedence ; but each of them hung back for the other fellow to pretend to it, if he dared. I saw exactly how they stood ; and being now, as master’s mate, superior officer to both, I put them at their ease, by showing that we must not be too grand. Thus being all in a happy mood, and desirous to make the best of things, we could not help letting our Captain go to dwell upon his own fortunes. Not that we failed of desire to help him, but that our own business pressed.

Gunner Heaviside led us down to a little cabin set up by himself

on the very brink of Tawe high-water mark, as a place of retirement when hard pressed, and unable to hold his own in the bosom of his family. You may well be surprised—for I was more, I was downright astonished—to find that this was my old ferry-boat, set up (like a dog begging) on shores, with the poop channelled into the sand, and the sides eked out with tarpaulin. A snigger berth I never saw for a quiet man to live in : and though Heaviside scorned to tell us, and we disdained to ask him, that—as I guessed from the first—was the true meaning of it. This poor fellow had been seduced—and I felt for his temptations—(when he came fresh from salt water, and our rolling ideas of women) into rapid matrimony with that sharp Nanette. He ought to have known much better ; and I ought to have given him warning ; but when he had made up his mind to settle, I thought it was something solid. I gave him the names, as I may have said, of good substantial farmers’ daughters, owning at least a good cow apiece from the date of their majority, also having sheets and blankets, and (as they told me many a time) picked goose-feathers enough for two. And yet he must go and throw himself away upon that Nanette so !

But when I came to hear his case, and he for a moment would not admit that it was worse than usual, or that he wanted pity more than any other men do, and scarcely knew how far he ought, or dared even, to accept it ; and then at the gurgling of his pipe, fancied that he heard somebody ; Jerry and I squeezed hands for a moment, and were very careful not to tantalise this poor man, with our strong-set resolution. “Give a wide berth to all womankind,” was what we would have said, if we could when now it

was too late for him ; “ failing that, stand off and on, and let the inhabitants come down, and push off their boats, and victual you.”

Poor Heaviside fetched a sigh enough to upset all arrangements ; for Jerry and I (good widowers both) were not likely to be damped, at the proper time for jollifying, by the troubles of a man who was meant to afford us rather a subject for rejoicing. Therefore we roused him up, and said, or at least conveyed to him, that he must not be so sadly down upon his luck like this. And hearing that he had six children now, and was in fear of a seventh one, I was enabled to recollect more than twenty instances of excellent women who had managed six, and gone off at the seventh visitation.

This good news put such sudden spirit into my old shipmate, that he ceased for a long time to be afraid of all that his wife could do to him. He never said a word to show what his mind suggested to him, whether good or evil. Only he made me tell those cases of unmerited mercy (as he put it) such a number of times that I saw what comfort he was deriving. And then we challenged him to tell us what was going on with him.

He seemed rather shy of discussing himself, but said that he was in Sir Philip's service, as boatman, long-shoreman, and river-bailiff, also pork-salter (as a son of the brine), and watercress-picker to the family. In a word, he had no work whatever to do ; as you may pretty safely conclude, when a man is compelled to go into a catalogue of his activities. This sense of ease overweighed him no doubt, and made the time hang heavily, after so much active service, so that Naval Instructor Heaviside moved about, and began to gossip, and having no busi-

ness of his own, spent his mind upon other folks'. Now, as we began to see through him, and the monotony of a fellow who is under his wife's thumb (without the frankness to acknowledge, and enlist our sympathies for this universal burden), both Jerry and I desired to hear something a little more new than this. All things are good in their way, and devised by a finely careful Providence ; so that no man, whose wife is a plague to him, can fail of one blessed reflection—to wit, that things are ordered so for the benefit of his fellow-creatures.

Thus our noble Heaviside, not being satisfied with the state of things at home—especially after he had appealed to Nanette's strong sense of reason (which bore sway in the very first week of half the honeymoon gloriously), and after he had yielded slowly all his outworks of tobacco, coming down from plugs to pipes, and from pipes to paper things, without stink enough to pay for rolling, and so on in the downward course, till he would have been glad of dry sugar-canes, or the stems of “ old man's beard,”—this poor but very worthy fellow gallantly surrendered, and resolved to rejoice, for the rest of his time, in his neighbours' business mainly.

Herein he found great and constant change from his own sharp troubles. Everybody was glad to see him ; and the wives who were the very hardest upon their own husbands, thought that he showed himself much too soft in the matter of Madame Heaviside. It was not his place when that subject arose, to say either “ yes ” or “ no ; ” but to put aside the question, as one that cannot be debated, out of the house, with dignity. Only every one liked him the more, the moment they remembered how contagious his complaint was.

Regard this question as you will (according to lack of experience), it was much for our benefit that the Naval Instructor was henpecked. He had accumulated things, such as no man can put together, whose wife allows him to have his talk. If he may lay down the law, or even suggest for consideration, he lets out half his knowledge, and forgets the other half of it. Whereas, if all his utterance is cut short at beginning, he has a good chance to get something well condensed inside him. Thus, if you find any very close-texture and terseness in my writings, the credit is due to my dear, good wife, who never let me finish a sentence. I daresay she had trouble with me; and I must be fair to her. It takes a very different man to understand a different woman; and these things will often touch us too late, and too sadly. I gave her a beautiful funeral, to my utmost farthing; and took her headstone upon credit, almost before the sexton would warrant that the earth was settled.

That night my old friend Heaviside (who has led me, from like experience, into a wholly different thing) showed some little of himself again, before our whale-oil light began to splutter and bubble too violently. Our society quite renewed his hope of getting away again; especially when I explained to him that (according to my long acquaintance with law), no one could hold him accountable for any quantity of children which a Frenchwoman might happen to have. An alien, to wit, and a foreigner, worst of all a Frenchwoman, could not expect all her froggy confinements to hold good in England. He had committed a foolish and unloyal act in buckling to with an

alien enemy, and he deserved to pay out for it; but I thought (and Coxswain Toms was of the same opinion) that poor Heaviside now had suffered ever so much more than even a Frenchwoman could expect of him. And we begged him to go afloat again.

He shook his head, and said that he had not invited our opinions, but to a certain extent endeavoured to be thankful for them. Yet he suggested delicately that after being so long at sea, we might have waited for our land-legs, before we became so positive. And if we would not mind allowing him to see to his own concerns, he would gladly tell all he knew about those of other people. This appeared to me to be a perfectly fair offer; but Jerry Toms took a little offence, on account of not knowing the neighbourhood. As superior officer of the three, I insisted upon silence, especially as from old times I knew what villany might be around us. And as soon as Heaviside could descry quite clearly what tack I stood upon, he distinctly gave his pledge to be open as the day. Therefore we all filled our pipes again, and took fresh lights for them, and looked at one another, while this old chap told his story. And please to mind that he had picked up a prawn-netful of little trifles, such as I never could stoop to scoop, because he won such chances through the way the women pitied him. Only I must in shipshape put his rambling mode of huddling things. If you please, we are now going back seven years, and more than that, to the very date of my escape from Devonshire; so as to tell you what none of us knew, until we met with Heaviside.

CHAPTER XLVII.—MISCHIEF IN A HOUSEHOLD.

It seems that no sooner did Parson Chowne discover how cleverly I had escaped him (after leaving my mark behind, in a way rather hard to put up with), than he began to cast about to win the last stroke somehow. And this, not over me alone, but over a very much greater man, who had carried me off so shamefully—that is to say, Captain Bampfylde. Heaviside was not there as yet, but with us in the Alcestis, so that he could not describe exactly the manner of Chowne's appearance. Only he heard from the people there, that never had such terror seized the house within human memory. Not that Chowne attempted any violence with any one; but that all observed his silence, and were afraid to ask him.

What was done that night between Sir Philip and the Parson, or even between the Parson and Sir Philip's heir, the Squire (whose melancholy room that Chowne had dared to force himself into), nobody seemed to be sure, although every one craved to have better knowledge. But it was certain that Isabel Carey went to her room very early that night, and would have no Nanette for her hair; and in the morning was "not fit for any one to look at," unless it were one who loved her.

Great disturbances of this sort happen (by some law of nature), often in large households. Give me the quiet cottage, where a little row, just now and then, comes to pass, and is fought out, and lapses (when its heat is over) into very nice explanations, and women's heads laid on men's shoulders, and tears that lose their way in smiles, and reproach that melts into self-

reproach. However, this was not the sort of thing that any sane person could hope for in thirty miles' distance from Master Stoyle Chowne, after once displeasing him. And what do you think Parson Chowne did now, or at least I mean soon afterwards? That night he had pressed his attentions on the beautiful young lady, so that in simple self-defence, she was forced to show her spirit. This aroused the power of darkness always lurking in him, so that his eyes shone, and his jaws met, and his forehead was very smooth. For he had a noble forehead; and the worse his state of mind might be, the calmer was his upper brow. After frightening poor Miss Carey, not with words, but want of them (which is a far more alarming thing, when a man encounters women), he took out his rights in the house by having an interview with Sir Philip; and no one could make any guess about what passed between them. Only it could not be kept from knowledge of the household that Parson Chowne obtained or took admission to Squire Philip also.

Of this unhappy gentleman very little has been said, because I then knew so little. I am always the last man in the world to force myself into private things; and finding out once that I must not ask, never to ask is my rule of action, unless I know the people. However, it does not look as if Master Heaviside had been gifted with any of this rare delicacy. And thus he discovered as follows.

Squire Philip's brain was not so strong as Captain Bampfylde's. He had been very good at figures, while things went on quietly; also able to ride round and see the tenants, and

deal with them, as the heir to a large estate should do. The people thought him very good: and that was about the whole of it. He never hunted, he never shot, he did not even care for fishing. A man may do without these things, if he gets repute in other ways (especially in witchcraft), but if he cannot show good cause for sticking thus inside four walls, an English neighbourhood is apt to set him down for a milksop. And tenfold thus, if he has the means to ride the best horse, and to own the best dogs, and to wear the best breeches that are to be bought.

Squire Philip must not be regarded, however, with prejudice. He had good legs, and a very good seat, and his tailor said the same of him. Also he took no objection to the scattering of a fox, with nothing left for his brush to sweep up, and his smell made into incense; nor was the Squire, from any point of view, or of feeling, squeamish. Nevertheless he did not give satisfaction as he should have done. He meant well, but he did not outpeak it; only because to his quiet nature that appeared so needless. And the rough rude world undervalued him, because he did not overvalue himself. This was the man who had withdrawn, after deep affliction, into a life, or a death, of his own, abandoning hope too rapidly. He had been blessed, or cursed, by nature with a large soft heart; and not the flint in his brains there should be for a wholesome balance. I know the men. They are not very common; and I should like to see more of them.

This Squire Philip's hair was whiter than his father's now, they said; and his way of sitting, and of walking, growing older. No wonder, when he never took a walk, or even showed himself; rather like a woman

yielding, who has lost her only child. It is not my place to defend him. All our ways are not alike. To my experience he seemed bound to grieve most about his children. For a man may always renew his wife, more easily than his children. But Squire Philip's view of the matter took a different starting-point. It was the loss of his wife that thus unwisely overcame him.

Accordingly he had given orders for women alone to come near him, because they reminded him of his wife, and went all around in a flat-footed way, and gave him to see that they never would ask, yet gladly would know, his sentiments. And living thus, he must have grown a little weak of mind, as all men do, with too much of a female circle round them.

What Parson Chowne said to this poor gentleman, on the night we are speaking of, was known to none except themselves and two or three maids who listened at the door, because their duty compelled them thus to protect their master. And all of these told different stories, agreeing only upon one point; but the best of them told it, as follows. Chowne expressed his surprise and concern at the change in his ancient friend's appearance, and said that it was enough to make him do what he often had threatened to do. Squire Philip then asked what he meant by this; and he answered in a deep low voice, "Bring to justice the villain who, for the sake of his own advantage, has left my poor Philip childless: and with all the fair Isabel's property too! Greedy, greedy scoundrel!" They could not see the poor Squire's face, when these words came home to him; but they knew that he fell into a chair, and his voice so trembled that he could not shape his answer properly.

"Then you too think, as I have

feared, as I have prayed, as I would die, rather than be forced to think. My only brother! And I have been so kind to him for years and years. That he was strong and rough I know—but such a thing, such a thing as this—”

“He began to indulge his propensities for slaughter rather early—I think I have heard people say.”

“Yes, yes, that boy at school. But this is a wholly different thing—what had my poor wife done to him?”

“Did you ever hear that Drake Bampfylde offered himself to the Princess, while you were away from home, and a little before you did?”

“I never heard anything of the kind. And I think that she would have told me.”

“I rather think not. It would be a very delicate point for a lady. However, it may not be true.”

“Chowne, it is true, from the way you say it. You know it to be true; and you never told me, because it prevents any further doubt. Now I see everything, everything now. Chowne, you are one of the best of men.”

“I know that I am,” said the Parson, calmly; “although it does not appear to be the public opinion. However, that will come right in the end. Now, my poor fellow, your wisest plan will be to leave yourself altogether to a thoroughly trustworthy man. Do you know where to find him?”

“Only in you, in you my friend. My father will never come to see me, because—you know what I mean—because—I dared to think what is now proved true.”

“Now Philip, my old friend, you know what I am. A man who detests every kind of pretence. Even a little inclined perhaps to go too far the other way.”

“Yes, yes; I have always known

it. You differ from other men; and the great fault of your nature is bluntness.”

“Philip, you have hit the mark. I could not have put it so well myself. My fine fellow, never smother yourself while you have such abilities.”

“Alas! I have no abilities, Chowne. The whole of them went, when my good-luck went. And if any remained to me, how could I care to use them? After what you have told me too! My life is over, my life is dead.”

All the maids agreed at this point, and would scorn to contradict, that poor Squire Philip fell down in a lump, and they must have run in with their bottles and so on, only that the door was locked. Moreover, they felt, and had the courage to whisper to one another, that they were a little timid of the Parson's witchcraft. There had been a girl in Sherwell parish who went into the Parson's service, and because she dared to have a sweetheart on the premises, she had orders for half an hour, before and after the moon rose, to fly up and down the river Yeo, from Sherwell Mill to Pilton Bridge; and her own mother had seen her. Therefore these maids only listened.

“All this shows a noble vein of softness in you, my good friend”—this was the next thing they could hear—“it is truly good and grand. What a happy thing to have a darling wife and two sweet children, for the purpose of having them slain, and then in the grandeur of soul forgiving it! This is noble, this is true love! How it sets one thinking!” This was the last that the maids could hear; for after that all was whispering. Only it was spread in every street, and road, and lane around, in about twelve hours afterwards, that a warrant from justices Chowne and Rambone, and

with consent of Philip Bampfylde, was placed in the hands of the officers of the peace for the apprehension of Captain Drake, upon a charge of murder.

When Sir Philip heard of this outrage on himself—and tenfold worse—upon their blameless lineage, he ordered his finest horse to be saddled, and put some of his army-clothes on; not his best, for fear of vaunting, but enough to know him by. Then he rode slowly up and down the narrow streets of Barnstaple, and sent for the mayor and the town-council, who tumbled out of their shops to meet him. To these he read a copy of the warrant, obtained from the head-constable, and asked, upon what information laid, such a thing had issued. Betwixt their respect for Sir Philip Bampfylde and their awe of Parson Chowne, these poor men knew not what to say, but to try to be civil to every one. Sir Philip rode home to Narnton Court, and changed his dress, and his horse as well, and thus set off for Chowne's house.

What happened there was known to none except the two parsons and the General; but every one was amazed when Chowne, in company with Parson Jack, rode into Barnstaple at full gallop, and redemanded his warrant from the head-constable, who held it, and also caused all entries and copies thereof to be destroyed and erased, as might be; and for this he condescended to assign no reason. In that last point he was consistent with his usual character; but that he should undo his own act, was so unlike himself that no one could at first believe it. Of course people said that it was pity for Sir Philip's age and character and position, that made him relent so: but others, who knew the man better, perceived that he had only acted as from the first was his

intention. He knew that the Captain could not be taken, of course, for many a month to come, and he did not mean to have him taken or put upon his trial; for he knew right well that there was no chance of getting him convicted. But by issue of that warrant he had stirred up and given shape to all the suspicions now languishing, and had enabled good honest people to lay their heads together and shake them, and the boldest of them to whisper that if a common man had done this deed, or been called in question of it, the warrant would have held its ground, until he faced an impartial jury of his fellow-countrymen. And, what was far more to Chowne's purpose, he had thus contrived to spread between Sir Philip and his eldest son a deadly breach, unlikely ever to be bridged across at all, and quite sure to stand wide for healing, up to the dying hour. Because it was given to all to know that this vile warrant issued upon oath of Squire Philip and by his demanding; and the father's pride would never let him ask if this were so.

Now people tried to pass this over, as they do with unpleasant matters, and to say, "let bygones go;" yet mankind will never have things smothered thus, and put away. When a game is begun, it should be played out: when a battle is fought, let it be fought out—these are principles quite as strong in the bosoms of spectators, as in our own breasts the feeling—"let us live our lives out."

But Isabel Carey's wrath would not have any reason laid near it. Her spirit was as fine and clear almost as her lovely face was, and she would not even dream that evil may get the upper hand of us.

She said to Sir Philip, "I will not have it. I will not stay in a house where such things can be

said of any one. I am very nearly eighteen years old, and I will not be made a child of. You have been wonderfully kind and good, and as dear to me as a father; but I must go away now; I must go away."

"So you shall," said poor Sir Philip; "it is the best thing that can be done. You have another guardian, more fortunate than I am; and, my dear, you shall go to him."

Then she clung to his neck, and begged and prayed him not to think of it more, only to let her stop where she was, in the home of all her happiness. But the General was worse to move than the rock of Gibraltar, whenever his honour was touched upon.

"My dear Isabel," he answered, "you are young, and I am old. You were quicker than I have been, to see what harm might come to you. That is the very thing which I am bound to save you from, my darling. I love you as if you were my own daughter; and this sad house will be, God knows, ten-fold more sad without you. But it must be so, my child. You ought to be too proud to cry, when I turn you out so."

Not to dwell upon things too much—especially when grievous—Narnton Court was compelled to get on without that bright young Isabel, and the female tailors who were always coming after her, as well as the noble gallants who hankered, every now and then, for a glimpse of her beauty and property. Isabel Carey went away to her other guardian, Lord Pomeroy, at a place where a castle of powder was; and all the old people at Narnton Court determined not to think of it; while all the young folk sobbed and cried; and take it on the average, a guinea a-year was lost to them.

All this had happened for seven years now: but it was that last piece of news, no doubt, almost as much as the warrant itself, that made our Captain carry on so, when we were in the lime-kiln. Because Lord Pomeroy had forbidden Isabel to write to her lover, while in this predicament. He, on the other hand, getting no letters, without knowing why or wherefore, was too proud to send any to her.

We saw the force of this at once, especially after our own correspondence (under both mark and signature) had for years been like the wind, going where it listeth. So we resolved to stop where we were, upon receipt of rations; and Heaviside told us not to be uneasy about anything. For although he durst not invite us to his own little cottage, or rather his wife Nanette's, he stood so well in the cook's good graces that he could provide for us; so he took us into the kitchen of Narnton Court, where they made us very welcome as Captain Drake's retainers, and told us all that had happened since the departure of Miss Isabel, between Narnton Court and Nympton. In the first place, Parson Chowne had been so satisfied with his mischief, that he spared himself time for another wedlock, taking as Mrs Chowne No. 4 a young lady of some wealth and beauty, but reputed such a shrew that nobody durst go near her. Before she had been Mrs Chowne a fortnight, her manners were so much improved that a child might contradict her; and within a month she had lost the power of frowning, but had learned to sigh. However, she was still alive, having a stronger constitution than any of the Parson's former wives.

Parson Jack had also married, and his wife was a good one; but Chowne (being out of other mis-

chief) sowed such jealousies between them for his own enjoyment, that poor Master Rambone had taken to drink, and his wife was so driven that she almost did the things she was accused of. Very seldom now did either of these two great parsons come to visit Sir Philip Bampfylde. Not that the latter entertained any ill-will towards Chowne for the matter of the warrant. For that he blamed his own son, the Squire, having received Chowne's version of it, and finding poor Philip too proud and moody to offer any explanation.

We had not been at Narnton Court more than a night, before I saw the brave General; for hearing that I was in the house, and happening now to remember my name, he summoned me into his privateroom, to ask about the Captain, who had started off (as I felt no doubt) for the castle of Lord Pomeroy. I found Sir Philip looking of course much older from the seven years past, but as upright, and dignified, and trustful in the Lord as ever. Nevertheless he must have grown weaker, though he did his best to hide it; for at certain things I told him of his favourite son, great tears came into his eyes, and his thin lips trembled, and he was forced to turn

away without finishing his sentences. Then he came back, as if ashamed of his own desire to hide no shame, and he put his flowing white hair back, and looked at me very steadily.

"Llewellyn," he said, "I trust in God. Years of trouble have taught me that. I speak to you as a friend almost, from your long acquaintance with my son, and knowledge of our story. My age will be threescore years and ten, if I live (please God) till my next birthday. But I tell you, David Llewellyn, and I beg you to mark my words, I shall not die until I have seen the whole of this mystery cleared off, the honour of my name restored, and my innocent son replaced in the good opinion of mankind."

This calm brave faith of a long-harassed man in the goodness of his Maker made me look at him with admiration and with glistening eyes; for I said to myself that with such a deep knave as Chowne at the bottom of his troubles, his confidence even in the Lord was very likely to be misplaced. And yet the very next day we made an extraordinary discovery, which went no little way to prove the soundness of the old man's faith.

AUTUMNAL MANŒUVRES.

THE autumnal manœuvres of last year were the first of the kind which had ever been attempted in this country. They did immense good; and they promise, if regularly continued, to do more. Putting even only 30,000 men annually in the field for a fortnight or three weeks, tests, though in a small yet in a sure way, every part of our military system. It teaches all those engaged what are the weak points of that system, and what are the strong ones—what needs to be amended, and what only requires to be let alone. If properly utilised, we should be able to start each year from the basis of the experience acquired during the preceding one. But to do this we require to “take stock,” as it were, of the results of each training, and to utilise the knowledge thus obtained as the platform from which to make a fresh start.

Any attempt, however humble, in this direction may perhaps be of use, as a means at least of inducing other and more competent judges to grapple with the subject. With this view we shall first briefly summarise what seems to us the direct results which may fairly be deduced from the experience of last season, and then proceed to enter upon the more debatable ground of the principles which should be kept steadily in view in framing those for future years.

It may be well to premise that, this being a first attempt, the whole force, in excess of the usual garrison, intended to take part in the manœuvres was sent in isolated regiments, battalions, and batteries to Aldershot, there to be organised into divisions and brigades, provided with staff, and supplied with transport—

in fact, made into a movable military machine—for the occasion.

It may also be well to observe, what a moment's reflection will show, that the great points in which experience is to be gained, and therefore improvement acquired, are in those operations which are carried on out of range of fire. In all these, embracing the important ones of organisation, movement, encampments, outpost duty, strategy, and tactics, up to the moment *when the troops close under a heavy fire*, the operations exactly resemble war, and form the best possible preparation for it.

But for actual battle itself, they do not afford an equally sure guide, or produce equally satisfactory results. You cannot here have the real result of fire, and without that it is impossible to act in the way in which you would in actual war. The troops, unchecked by the effects of shot and shell, invariably and necessarily approach each other in a way that they could never do in combat (exactly the same thing has been observed at all the great Prussian autumnal manœuvres); and hence the lessons to be derived from this, the most picturesque and interesting portions of the whole, are not equal in value to those derivable from the more prosaic but really useful anterior movements.

Let us not be misunderstood. We are very far indeed from saying that much valuable tactical instruction may not be derived from such movements.

No one who saw Hope Grant's ready stand, when, turning unexpectedly to bay on the first day of the operations on Gravel Pit Hill, he suddenly massed his batteries beneath the tall pines there, and

from the iron semicircle poured forth a very sheet of fire on Staveley's astonished ranks; or who witnessed Marshall lead his mail-clad troopers, in glittering lines, over the low green swell hard by the Chobham camp against the head of Baker's advancing horsemen, when he scattered his light hussars to the four winds of heaven; or who gazed on Lyson's ready rush on Staveley's unguarded flank on the last day of all, when he won the bare brown summit of the Fox Hills, and led on the magnificent advance of the 42d Highlanders,*—will say that great lessons in tactics were not taught in that week.

But we do say that they are not so surely taught, and cannot be so unhesitatingly accepted, as those which are given out of the range of fire.

These matters being premised, we are inclined to think that the following observations will be dissented from by few who had any share in those manœuvres:—

I. It would conduce much to the interest, and add much to the good to be derived from them, if the troops were, from the first, divided into two opposing forces of equal, or *nearly equal*, strength.

There is little room for the display of generalship against *overwhelming* numbers, and there is little encouragement to exert it under such circumstances.

A certain amount of inequality in the contending forces will stimulate, but too great a one will crush, the efforts of officers in command of troops so placed.

No way, however, of bringing about this equality is so bad as that practised during the last days of the late manœuvres, when a division was dissolved and divided between the contending parties.

As the troops are to be in the end so they should be from the beginning—remaining always on the same sides, in the same organisation, and under the same officers. Above all things, let changes in the command, and hesitation and indecision on this subject, be avoided when the operations have once commenced. Such matters cannot be too much thought over before, or too *rigidly adhered to* after, the work has begun.

II. Brigades should, under no circumstances, consist of more than three, or at the utmost four, battalions. Those employed this year were much too large and lumbering. They were generally composed of five or six battalions, and were in fact divisions with only a brigade staff to work them—a convenient economy for the War Office, but a deplorable arrangement for the troops.†

III. The reserve forces should not be mixed with the regulars in the same brigades (except in rare and exceptional instances), but should form separate brigades of their own in the same division.

When you mix in the same brigade regiments in a totally different state of drill, discipline, and consequent efficiency, you commit an equal injustice on both.

Either the efficient regiments must be kept back abreast of the capabilities of their weaker brethren,

* Much good-humoured "chaff" took place round the camp-fires that night on the failure of that division in which "all the talents," from Abyssinia to the Red River, had been united.

† It may be said that the Prussian brigades consist of six battalions, but this is a misuse of terms. The Prussian regiment of three battalions, under its full colonel, corresponds to our brigade under its brigadier. Their brigade of two regiments corresponds to our division of two brigades; and their division of two infantry brigades, with cavalry and artillery, will correspond to our corps—when we get one.

or the less efficient ones must be exposed to a strain to which they are not equal, and which will do them much harm. You must learn to walk before you can be taught to run. If you chain a man and a child together you will sorely diminish the efficiency in their own spheres of both.

But when the regular and reserve forces are employed in the same division, but in separate brigades, then it becomes possible for an able division leader to apportion to each work they are fitted for, and thus to secure progress and instruction for all.

This was very apparent last autumn on one or two occasions when the reserve forces were handled in separate brigades, and more particularly on the day of the attack on the intrenched camp at Chobham.

When possible, militia and volunteers should also be formed in separate brigades. They have quite different characteristics, which render their acting together not in all respects desirable or advantageous.

Should it ever be considered advisable to employ divisions of more than two brigades, then a good formation for one would be in four brigades—two of regulars, one of militia, one of volunteers.

IV. The reserve brigades should be commanded by very carefully chosen officers (if possible by the colonels employed on the staff of the reserve forces), who should be each assisted by *two* staff officers; these officers being instructed that they must take much more charge of, and render much more assistance to, the reserve regiments than they would do to line ones in similar circumstances; and the same instructions should be given to the Control officers of such brigades.

Three good, steady, old line regiments will pull a respectable, but

not very bright, brigadier through much; but it requires a thoroughly able, efficient, and active commander to handle a reserve brigade with credit to himself and profit to those under his orders.

V. Great interest was excited as to how the Control Department would perform its duties in the two great branches of Transport and Supply; and every one, we think, who has considered the matter impartially, will admit that it acted with the greatest zeal and energy, and that, on the whole, its efforts were successful.

In regard to Transport, the means at its disposal were of four kinds.

1. The regular Transport of the Department. This was admirable. Its only fault was that there was too little of it.

2. The extra Transport provided by the purchase of horses for the occasion. This was almost undistinguishable from the former. The waggons and harness were Control, and the drivers Army Service Corps men or soldiers. When the horses were sold at the end of the manœuvres, we understand that it was found that this was much the cheapest way of supplying it—much more so than that of hiring.

3. The Auxiliary Hired Transport. This was the weak point of the whole. It proved both expensive and inefficient. Its great fault was its inequality. Some of the horses were very fine, many very bad; but the great evil was the extremely defective state of the harness, and often unsuitable nature of the carts.

Had the operations been conducted exclusively along the great highroads, this transport would have answered fairly; but for country cross-roads it was quite unsuited. In deep ruts, over steep hills, and in swampy passes, the rotten harness was continually giving way,

and many of the waggons breaking down.

This proves, not that this kind of transport is not of use, and of great use, but that it should be employed only under the circumstances suited to it.

So long as the cartage is along the great main lines of road it will work well; when turned into the cross-roads it will break down. That is, for all transport *a day's march or more in rear* of the operating force, it will do, for at that distance it can be almost always directed along good roads. But for transport within that radius—that is, when the waggons must follow the actual course of the columns by indifferent cross-paths and over obstacles of ground—then the only sort to be trusted to is the regular one of the Control, which should be here exclusively employed.

This points to a general principle, and one of extensive application in war, as regulating the proportion in which regular and auxiliary transport requires to be provided for troops. That for the immediate distribution of supplies to the army itself, and for the transfer of those supplies from the main lines of road, or neighbouring railway stations, should be invariably regularly organised and trained military transport. That for the bringing up of such supplies from the distant depots along the main roads to within a day's march of the army may be formed of pressed or hired country transport, if it be well organised and put under the control of efficient and experienced officers, with an adequate and regular staff.

4. The Regimental Transport. This system was tried in two cavalry regiments. The carts and harness were provided by the Control. The horses and drivers were furnished by the corps. They carried all the luggage of the regiment.

This answered admirably. The regimental officers naturally took good care of their own horses—on the efficiency of which their own comfort and that of their men entirely depended.

We believe an extension of this system to every regiment employed in the manœuvres for the amount of transport required for itself would be the best mode of providing for it. To infantry battalions horses would need to be supplied, as well as waggons and harness, but any amount of drivers could be got from the ranks.

The one and only practical objection to this is, that, when the army makes a halt, some reluctance will probably be experienced on the part of commanding officers to surrender temporarily their regimental carts if needed for the general use of the army.

VI. The Supply branch was that which was most subjected to criticism.

1. One point upon which numerous complaints were made by the troops was, the very late hours at which the rations, especially of meat, were often issued.

To understand how a remedy can be applied to this, one must clearly follow the mode in which the rations are distributed.

In regard to the meat, the great difficulty was the Cattle Contagious Diseases Act, which obliged the animals to be killed in London, instead of being sent, as on service, in flocks and herds with the troops.

From London the meat comes down by rail, and is forwarded in waggons to the headquarters of the division.

On the arrival of the column in camp, it is—(1.) brought to the divisional commissariat depot. (2.) From thence it is distributed to each of the assistant commissaries of brigades *in succession*. (3.) By

them it is taken to the commissariat depot of each brigade. (4.) From thence it is issued out to each of the regiments composing the brigade *in succession*.

Now, when the time necessary to *dole out in succession* meat first to the commissaries of brigade, and then to the quartermasters of regiments, is taken into consideration, it is evident at once both where the great delay takes place and where a remedy may be applied.

Were the meat issued *simultaneously* to each of the brigade commissaries at the divisional depot, and then distributed *simultaneously* to each of the quartermasters of regiments at the brigade depots, the length of the process would be diminished more than one half.

By the time the seventh regiment of a distant brigade has been able to draw its rations, and have them conveyed to its own lines, after a long march, darkness will have well set in.

The remedy for this is clear. At the divisional depot there should be meat-issuers for each brigade; at the brigade depot one issuer, at the *very least*, for every two regiments,—so as to enable the issues to be made at both places as nearly as possible simultaneously.

The same remarks apply almost identically to the issues of bread and groceries.

2. Had each regiment its own regimental transport, a considerable saving in time and trouble could also often be effected by sending one of its light carts to the brigade depot to bring back the rations.

But the most effectual of all modes of insuring that each regiment should have its meat issued in good time, would be to have the rations for the next day issued on the evening of the preceding one, put in a regimental cart, carried with the baggage, and distributed to the men the moment it arrives in camp.

The meat is so fresh, and the weather in September is generally so cool, that there would be no difficulty in carrying this out.

When a *halt* takes place, regimental transport would get over the difficulty of supplying the troops on outpost duty with their rations. The rations could be cooked in camp for the men on duty, and sent out to them in a regimental cart; or when the men were too far off for this, their rations of wood could be so sent, and then they could cook for themselves.

3. In justice to the Control Department, it must be said that upon almost every occasion it was, we believe, found that the rations were up in good time at the depots. It was in the distribution from the divisional to the brigade depots, and from these last to the regimental lines, that the delay took place. And a good part of this delay was owing to bad arrangements on the part of the regiments themselves—to a want of activity in the commanding officers and quartermasters in finding out when the rations arrived at the brigade depots, and to a want of energy in sending at once for them. Our regimental officers are too much in the habit of sitting with their hands folded until the Control comes and drops their rations into their mouths.

VII. Experience has shown that the present ration of meat ($\frac{3}{4}$ lb.) is too small for the men when in the field. It is enough for them in barracks; but to keep them in health, 1 lb. is absolutely required when they are on service, marching hard and living under canvas.

On the other hand, the present field-ration of bread ($1\frac{1}{2}$ lb.) might be modified. 1 lb. would suffice with the enlarged meat-ration, provided a field-ration of $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of cheese was also issued. This

would be one of the greatest practical boons for the men.*

VIII. How the soldier should live in the field ought, we think, to be as follows :—

The evening before marching, he ought to receive $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of bread and his ration of cheese. With this he could have some hot coffee and bread before marching in the morning, and he would take in his haversack bread and cheese enough to have a slight meal at a halt on the march. On coming into camp, he should receive his remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of bread and his 1 lb. of meat.

After the first day this would practically be done by issuing to him on his arrival in camp 1 lb. of bread (one-half for that day's and one-half of the next day's ration), $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. of cheese and 1 lb. of meat.

These changes in the system of issuing, combined with the general introduction of regimental transport and the proposed alteration in the ration, would, we are convinced, make the soldier comfortable in the field in so far as the quality and distribution of his food are concerned.

IX. The Control are much in favour of issuing rations to the men before a march for the day of marching; and it is understood they would like also to make them carry their rations for two days in their haversacks.

The system would no doubt be most convenient for the Control, for it would shift the weight from their carts on to the backs of the men, and do away with more than half the trouble of distribution.

But it is entirely opposed to the genius of our army, and is to the last degree unpopular amongst our soldiers.

The practical result with us is,

that the men are half starved on the days on which the rations are so issued.

It is quite true that it is occasionally necessary to order the troops to carry their rations cooked with them, because it sometimes happens that they cannot get in until late at night. But this is an exceptional case, to be met in an exceptional manner; and on the principle that they had better on such occasions receive (what it practically amounts to) a half-ration rather than no food.

Every army has its own peculiarities which it is in vain to contend with.

One of the most prominent ones of the British army is, and always has been, that to keep the men in health and strength you *must* carry their rations for them and issue them daily on the spot.

And these national peculiarities are stronger than official red-tape rules and the convenience of departments.

Besides, there is little use in trying to diminish the burden of the soldier's kit if you simply more than make up the weight of his necessities and comforts taken off by heaping on his aching limbs the raw rations of the Control.

X. The most difficult point to get over is the deficiency in the supply of firewood. Rations without fuel are of no use; and, we hear, it frequently happened that the rations themselves were issued in good time, but the fuel not till late in the evening.

This was owing to the fuel being supplied by contract, and not carried in the Army Service Corps waggons. It is a question requiring great attention, for it proved the

* Preserved meat, sausages, &c., are not liked by the men. They are not accustomed to them, and will not take to them. This is to be lamented, but it cannot be helped. It is a fact, and we must make the best of it.

most serious and insurmountable practical difficulty that occurred during the manœuvres, and that because it was often impossible for the general officer commanding to indicate to the Controller the exact spot on which he would encamp the next day—this frequently depending upon the result of the day's operations; yet without this knowledge the Controller could not direct the contractor where to have his wood-supply stacked.

Such appear to be a few of the conclusions most clearly deducible from the experience of the late manœuvres.

Now for a few words in regard to such undertakings in the future.

We trust never again to see the force intended for these movements brought together for the purpose of organisation to one spot, to be there fitted out in haste, and hurled, half organised, into the field.

If the late campaign in France has taught one lesson more than another, it is that the days of going to war with brigades and divisions hastily formed from independent battalions, with a scratch park staff and new generals, are over. Such a force so formed is simply "fore-doomed to dogs and vultures." This system would do well enough when opposed to one equally bad, but is positively fatal when employed against an army kept permanently in a state of divisional and brigade organisation. This is a bore, it is a great addition to the permanent expense of armies, it disturbs our routine ideas, but *success in war is now impossible without it.*

Let us have no haste, confusion, and vacillation in any such manœuvres as we may have in the future.

Above all, no breaking up of organised bodies, no changes and counter-changes of commanders in the field.

Let the place be chosen early in the year; let the force to be employed be then at once fixed; let the mode in which it is to be organised be next determined; and by the month of May at latest, let all the brigades at least, and, when possible, all the divisions, be told off.

I. It may seem at first a hard thing to determine how such a force should be organised; but if the general and governing principle is once got hold of, and firmly adhered to, much of this difficulty will vanish.

We assume that the force will be divided into two nearly equal bodies or small armies.

Now, in preparing any troops for service in the field, the most convenient distribution is into four parts, a right, centre, left, and reserve. And each of these parts again should be subdivided into a first and second line.*

If the army is a large one, each of these parts would naturally be represented by a corps; if moderate in size, by a division; if very small, by a brigade. But in this last case each brigade of infantry would need to be raised from three to four battalions, to enable it to fight in two lines of two battalions each. With the reserve, too, must be the heavy cavalry and reserve artillery.

Thus the arrangement of the whole force into corps, divisions, or simply brigades, depends on two things: first, on the numbers to be employed; and, secondly, on the necessity of a quadruple formation for each of the opposing sides.

A firm adherence to this principle

* It is of course to be understood, that when we use these expressions we do not mean that each of these four divisions should always retain the local place thus assigned to it: that in war should be impossible. But every army in line of battle has a right, centre, left, and reserve; and it is advisable that each of these should be represented by a tactical unit.

will lead us out of most difficulties and doubts on this subject.

II. We attach immense importance to the troops intended for these manœuvres being, not pitchforked into Aldershot or any other central spot for formation, but being carefully formed into brigades always, and when practicable into divisions, *in their own local districts*, and sent up to the general points of concentration fully fitted out for the field in every particular, under the brigadiers with whom they have been serving, with a staff to whom they are accustomed, and with their whole field equipment and transport provided by their own district controllers.

This would lead to every district acquiring that information and experience which is now almost confined to one. It would insure the staff and control in each being fully up to their work; it would keep the battalions together under the general officers and staff to whom they are known, and would induce a regularity and ease in these undertakings which at present they are sadly in want of.

To illustrate roughly what we mean: Say that the local distribution of the army is such that Aldershot could furnish the men for two divisions of infantry and one of cavalry; Portsmouth for one of infantry; London for a reserve brigade of infantry and one of cavalry; Plymouth for a brigade; Dover for a division,—and so on. Let each of these districts be, early in the summer, told what it will have to do, and ordered at once to have the

field equipment issued, the staff told off, the brigades formed, and as far as local and financial considerations will permit, everything in readiness. And then, when the time comes, let each district send up to the point of concentration its own quota *fully organised for the field from its own local resources*.

We are quite sure that this arrangement would do more to increase the good to be derived from our autumnal manœuvres, and to prepare our army for being at any time suddenly got ready for service, than any course that could be adopted. To our thinking it would quadruple the value of these manœuvres, and be the first faint step in approach to the perfection of Prussian organisation.

III. Greater care should be taken to post the light and heavy cavalry in proper proportions to the contending forces, and to employ each on its own proper duty only.

In the late manœuvres one division had the whole of our heavy cuirass cavalry and a heavy dragoon regiment assigned to it, without a single light horseman; and consequently, the, to a soldier, misplaced spectacle was exhibited of Life-Guardsmen on outpost duty. We use the words “misplaced spectacle” advisedly, for nothing, we believe, could exceed the admirable way in which the duty was performed by them.* And it is a noteworthy circumstance that, though opposed to some of the most famed light cavalry regiments in our service, under a well-known officer, the hussars never gained a single advan-

* We are well aware that that great military authority, and loyal and chivalrous subject, Sir Charles Dilke, has expressed his decided opinion, founded on his own observation, that the Household Cavalry were useless on this occasion. We, a simple writer in ‘Blackwood,’ are naturally timorous at breaking a lance with so grave an authority; but we cannot, for the sake of miserable, despised truth, refrain from expressing our opinion, *quantum valeat*, as absolutely and directly opposed to his judgment in every particular.

tage in their own peculiar department, when once hostilities began, over their apparently unwieldy adversaries. But it was "misplaced" all the same, for it was a *waste of power*. In modern war, cuirass cavalry are very necessary, though not in large proportions;* and it is most desirable that they should always be preserved fresh, and with their horses in good condition for those few but decisive opportunities which the end of a great battle usually presents. But this is their duty, and not to act as outposts. And it is as absurd to put a heavy trooper of the Blues as a vedette on a distant hill, as it would be to charge one of their ponderous squadrons with a swarm of light hussars. Division of labour, and keeping every one to his own, is the secret of success. It is an old but a true saying that a "Jack of all trades is a master of none."

IV. There is another point with reference to outposts in regard to which we think attention is necessary. In some of the divisions far too great a number of men were sent on this duty—regard being had either to the total force of the division itself, or to the extent of ground to be occupied. This, we think, is a very great mistake. There is no duty so hard on the soldier as this, especially when carried on by night; but there is none so important, or to which such untiring care and vigilance should be applied. It is therefore to the last degree unwise to overwork the men at it, and so to make them careless on it. To go on outpost duty after a hard day's march—or to make such a march after a

night so spent—is about the severest trial the soldier can be put to; therefore it should never be exacted in excess of what the necessities of the case call for, or the requirements of actual service would justify. With this view it should always be stated clearly in orders whether the night is held to be a period of truce or not; and if it is, then no outposts should be sent out until the morning, when they ought to be on their ground an hour before hostilities commence.

It is also to be remarked that, as a general rule, not nearly use enough was made of our light cavalry to retard, envelop, and watch closely the advance of the enemy, so as to obtain exact and early information as to the tendency of his movements.

V. The umpire system is one which is as yet in its infancy with us. When two forces are opposed to one another, umpires are absolutely necessary, for neither party will ever admit themselves to be beat, and without umpires matters would come to a dead-lock.

But the duty of an umpire is one of exceeding difficulty, and requiring both much theoretical knowledge and a great deal of practical experience in the field. The great fault of the system—the one which requires to be most strenuously guarded against—is its tendency to develop over-caution amongst the combatants, to extinguish all dash, to destroy all enterprise.

When a brisk attack is being made on an important point, the chances are that an excited umpire rides up and exclaims: "These men

* The last campaign in France has restored the name and proved the utility of cuirass cavalry in war. So far from throwing aside armour and abandoning heavy horse, the Prussians are moving in the opposite direction. They have found the necessity of a reserve of heavy horsemen; and experience has convinced them that the cuirass, from the glancing of the balls, is practically impervious to rifle-fire, and so imparts a confidence to the men which is of untold value in this arm of the service.

would be decimated—they would be annihilated—the attack is madness. The troops employed must be put out of action—march them off.” Now there is a very simple way to avoid this disgrace. Do not bring your men under serious fire. To this course there is only one objection—you cannot win a battle in accordance with it. You cannot “make omelettes without breaking eggs.” Consider for a moment how many points require to be thought of before such a decision should be given. (1.) Was the point of attack well chosen? was it on either the strategical or the tactical key of the field of battle, or of any portion of it? (2.) If so, was the force employed sufficient to justify the attempt? (3.) Was it handled judiciously, so as to take advantage of all available cover in moving up? (4.) When the decisive moment came, was it thrown on swiftly and with sufficient energy? (5.) What was likely to be the effect upon it of the fire to which it was exposed; *regard being had to the amount of fire to which the troops firing on it were themselves exposed?* This last is a consideration which we have seldom seen attended to, but which in reality is usually the most important of all. Lastly (6.) Did the importance of the advantage to be gained justify the loss certain to be incurred?

We have heard that on one occasion an umpire of rank directed a position of great strength, and which could have been held with ease against three times the force

actually attacking it, to be evacuated because a few skirmishers were creeping round one of its flanks—the fact being that the advance of these men was so absurd that the defenders had ceased firing at them. This umpire was clearly forgetful of the keen saying of the Duke of Wellington: “All have read of, but no one has ever seen, large bodies of men put to flight by a handful of light infantry and dragoons.” On another occasion it is said that when a division was engaged in the difficult task of retiring before a superior enemy, the umpire in that part of the field suddenly declared the road by which one of its columns was moving out of bounds, and consequently threw it on the already choked line of the other brigade—the fact being that the umpire was wrong and the division leader right.

These examples show the necessity of accurate information, sound judgment, and extreme care on the part of officers employed on this difficult and most thankless duty.*

VI. It is a mooted point whether the “Chief of the Staff” system should be employed in our coming manœuvres.

A slight attempt was made to test it in one of the divisions last autumn. But though the able officer selected was the very best who could have been chosen, yet the system itself had not a fair trial. It was determined on, and the change to it made when the division had actually taken the field. And so little was the first principle of the system attended to, that the

* There is an umpire rule which ought to be altered before another year. It was held that a railway was an *impassable* obstacle. Consequently, when a bridge under or over one was marked as blown up, no troops were allowed to pass until the two or three hours required to repair it had elapsed. Thus a railway was worse than a river, for you could not pontoon it. Now the truth is that a railway is usually hardly any obstacle at all. If a bridge on one is, in actual war, found to be broken, then the infantry and cavalry are simply marched across the rails at the nearest convenient spot—and so with the artillery. This ought to be the rule, and no more time should be given than that required to move each arm over at the nearest practicable point.

Chief of the Staff was actually also the officer, and the only one, of the Adjutant-General's Department in it. Now the very essence of this system is, that the officer so employed should direct the labours of the various departments under him, but not take into his own charge the details of any of them.

The object of the Chief of the Staff is twofold. (1.) To relieve the general officers in command of all attention to subordinate details. (2.) To secure the working in unison of *all* the different branches and departments required by an army in the field.

Thus it will be seen that the Control, as well as the Adjutant and Quartermaster General's Departments, must be placed under him.

Unless this is done the system is of no use. If the general officer, instead of having his mind free to consider the large movements and plan of operations, and to study carefully the complicated game before him, is to be plagued with the endless references of the Controller on all the numerous petty points in which he requires information, as to what the Quartermaster-General is doing, or the Adjutant-General is thinking about, he had just as well have no Chief of the Staff at all.

It is to weld into one machine, to unite in one movement, the various departments, that a Chief of the Staff is required. He should receive the general instructions and plan of the commander, and be responsible for its communication to, and execution by, the army, corps, or division, as the case may be, *in all its parts*. If he has not power to do this he is but an encumbrance, and is better out of the way.

The system as at present organised for our service is, that the adjutant-general, quartermaster-general, and controller of an army or corps, all

take their instructions direct from the general in command, and theoretically are not supposed to have any direct correspondence with each other. That is, the general is to be also his own Chief of the Staff, and to arrange all the details and secure the necessary unity of action of all the departments himself.

Such a system, if carried out to its logical consequences, in a difficult series of operations, would be unworkable by any but an exceptional man.

It may be said, however, that it worked well on a small scale during the late manœuvres.

To this we reply: Yes, it did so; but that was owing to the men, not the system.

The officers of the Control Department were admirably chosen, and were determined to make it work. Able, energetic, sensible, they practically, we have been informed, threw over their regulations, cast down the barrier of red-tape which fenced them in, and took counsel in all things with the heads of the Combatant Staff. They were met in the same spirit; and thus all matters were arranged in common, and worked harmoniously to a single end. But this was due to the men, and not to the measures. Had the men been impracticable, and stood on the letter of their regulations, the result would have been very different. They, in fact, by good sense, adopted voluntarily towards one another that system which the Chief of the Staff is designed to enforce by authority.

But a system which depends for its proper working, not on the regulations of the service, but on the tact and good feeling of those employed in carrying them out, is essentially bad. It is based on an unstable equilibrium. It is balancing the pyramid on its apex.

And what that system when employed in actual war, *and opposed to a more perfect one*, will lead to, we do not require to go far to learn. We have only to look back to the experience of the last two years.

The Prussians had a system such as that which we have described as the "Chief of the Staff system." *The French had one such as we now have.* A Combatant Staff and an Intelligence (corresponding to our Control), co-equal and independent; no local decentralisation, and a temporary divisional and brigade organ-

isation. Let us never forget that our present system is exactly the French one—that which led to Woerth, Gravelotte, and Sedan—that which has been weighed in the balance and found wanting; and let any one who would doubt this read the invaluable pamphlet attributed to the late Emperor of the French, or any of the numerous French accounts of the opening of the campaign of 1870, and if he will not then be convinced, we can only say that he would not be so "though one rose from the dead." *

* "The delays," says the ex-Emperor, "which occurred arose, in a great measure, from the defects of our military organisation as it has existed for the last fifty years, and which revealed themselves from the very beginning. Instead of having, as is the case with Prussia, army corps *always in an organised state*, recruited in the province itself, and possessing *on the spot* their *matériel* and accessories complete, in France the troops composing an army are disposed over the whole country, whilst the *matériel* is stored in different cities, in crowded magazines. In case it is decided to form an active division upon any given point of the frontier, the artillery generally comes from some distant place, and the train equipage and ambulances from Paris and Verdun. Nearly all the munitions and provisions are brought from the capital. As for the soldiers of the reserve, they rejoin their regiments from all parts of France. The consequence is, that the railways are insufficient for the transportation of the men, horses, and *matériel*; *confusion takes place everywhere*. . . . It was the same with the camping *matériel*, the ambulance waggons, and the officers' transportation. Instead of being distributed among the depots *in the centre of each department*, they were all stored in a limited number of military warehouses. To these defects must be added the *limited power intrusted to the generals in command* of the departments, and to the military commissariat. The most trifling thing required a ministerial authorisation. This administrative routine deprived the generals of the activity and foresight which may sometimes remedy defective organisation. We hasten to add, however, that, to make up an army, *less account must be taken of individual intelligence than of substantial organisation*, moved by simple machinery, and *capable of working regularly in time of war, because it had been habituated to work regularly in time of peace*."

See to the same effect 'La Campagne de 1870, par un Officier de l'Armée du Rhin,' p. 16, 17; and 'Sedan, par le General Wimpffen.'

THE MANCHESTER NONCONFORMISTS AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY.

WHAT is become of political philosophy in England? What is the idea which Englishmen have framed of the Constitution which this country possesses—or, if that is disliked, which it ought to possess? Still more, what conception do men form of the respect which is due to any constitution, even if it were the best and wisest which had ever dawned on their imaginations? These are questions of vast importance. In former times, a settled notion respecting the political institutions by which they were governed was deeply embedded in the mind of the people of England. Certain principles and rules were associated with its existence and its working. Laws embodying those principles ruled for many ages. The machinery of government rested on a deep and solid foundation of common law, usage, and tradition. The nation, as the years flowed onwards, enjoyed a perpetual inheritance of a mode of political life, of a definite system of collective existence, which was continuous in thought and fact, under every variety of the public fortune. Englishmen were united to one another by the recognition of common principles of government. Other nations were administered by other political machinery, each after its own fashion: the English people also had a method of their own, to which they submitted as the established practice whereby the public life of the country was to be conducted. It was thus that arose that respect for law which has distinguished the English in the modern, as it had honoured the Roman nation in the ancient, world. The law, as it was laid down, was revered and submitted to: and if a change in its commands was held

to be expedient, the prescribed mode for effecting reform was loyally observed. Such changes were numerous, nay, incessant: for the history of the English people is the history of incessant advance, of perpetual adaptation to the altering circumstances of the nation. But the great point to be noticed is the general faithfulness with which Englishmen adhered to the framework of their political government: for even when the changes were most violent, as in the days of the Commonwealth and the Revolution, the law received no upsetting blow—the outlines of the civil government were preserved even during the transitory time of Cromwell. The general result of this long-continued course of public life was the sinking down into the inmost thought of the people of a certain idea of the government of England, of the Constitution of the country, of the form of public life under which every man was born, and which he with rational, if vague instinct, felt he had to live as obviously as his physical existence. Long-perpetuated habit rendered the political portion of his life as natural and necessary to an Englishman as were the social and material under the actual circumstances of the world.

This respect for the Constitution was not founded on any belief in divine right or supernatural origin: its foundation was nothing deeper than actual existence and long usage; but that was deep enough. In England, as in every other country of the world, governments for the most part have sprung up by what may be here called accident, by the circumstances of the day, by the chance forces at work in the actual civilisation of the period.

They have not been the creation of theory and deliberate preference; they have grown up as natural plants. Usage and habit have then confirmed them: human life arranged itself in the grooves thus casually provided: innumerable relations to tie man to man developed themselves as the history of the country rolled on; and thus what is called a constitution became permanently established. Such is the course of events which political institutions have pursued historically. No doubt new elements were ingrafted on these ancient stocks in the course of ages; but most, if not all, except where violence intervened, were gradual developments evolved out of pre-existing materials. And what is the lesson which these facts teach? That constitutions planned upon theory are unnatural, inconsistent with the law of the development of human life in national groups, unstable, and of precarious vitality. The actual condition of France signally illustrates this lesson. France at this moment is a republic without republicans—that is, it has a government founded on idea, on theoretical views, on notions founded on the fitness of things. And what is the consequence? France is in no sympathy with her political institutions, is unable to work them, is wafted to and fro by every blast of hope or fear, can create nothing, can construct no abiding frame of national life, can enact no permanent or respected laws, and lies helplessly exposed to every kind of political danger. This comes from such principles as that a republic is above universal suffrage, is a God-given inspiration, and an indestructible instinct planted in the inmost depths of human nature itself. It is not difficult for passionate enthusiasm to propound the idea: to realise it in fact is impossible, when the

hopes, the usages, the sentiments, and the general cast of mind of the people, are ignored as factors of the problem.

It is easy to perceive the unhappy situation of France, to discern its causes, and to glorify ourselves on being so much better than Frenchmen; but are we really free from the same disease? Is it an unknown thing in the England of this day to proclaim new ideas with vehemence, to dwell on their intrinsic superiority above all others, and to demand with loud-speaking passion the reconstruction of the national life of the country, without deigning to take into consideration the hopes and feelings of the people, or the disturbance which the reconstruction of a political machine must necessarily create? Alas! there is too much ground for fearing that we have not escaped the contagion of the intellectual malady of our time. It is widely spread in England, if in a form as yet not so virulent as the French. It may easily land our country in the same disaster, if haply the process be somewhat slower. The construction of government upon ideas as distinct from repairs applied to the political edifice in harmony with its political architecture, is the occupation at this hour of many English minds, and commences to animate practical effort. How many are there now agitating for a reconstruction of the House of Lords—that is, for the suppression of a second chamber—upon the theory that an hereditary chamber is indefensible in the abstract? It never occurs to these sapient people to bestow a moment's thought on the actual service, in the management of the public life of England, which the hereditary House of Lords that England has the pre-eminent good fortune to possess, has rendered in the past and in the present. How many, again, are preaching the

dissolution of our present electoral machinery, and the substitution in its place of equal electoral districts, without deigning to examine the real working of that system which has grown up insensibly from the days of Simon de Montfort? Another set of persons, who form a very numerous and troublesome body, are exercising great political pressure to transfer legislation from the common Parliament of the nation to local groups of ratepayers, and seek to place the details of private life, the liberty to guide our conduct and supply our wants, at the mercy of multitudes of small, ignorant, and uneducated local assemblies. And they do this upon theory, in the name of moral philosophy, under a conception of scientific politics, and of its right and duty to prescribe the details of morality to every citizen. They seek to diminish drunkenness—a most laudable object; but in their eagerness to obtain their end they think of nothing else, and will not condescend for one instant to reflect whether the duty of sobriety is not an individual concern, and whether the precedent set up on the ground of a good end may not establish tyranny hereafter in matters of far deeper importance. They take their stand on a grand doctrine. They inveigh against the pernicious influence of Bentham; and, under cover of a name unpopular with many, they proclaim the theory of State interference, of paternal government, of the control of every action of human life, so elaborately expounded by Plato.

The track of this insidious pestilence can be discerned in other directions. New doctrines rear their heads in the demand for the regulation of the hours of labour by the State. In France and in other parts of the Continent more advanced progress has been made. The duty was stoutly urged, and was partially

carried into practice in 1848, of establishing national workshops by the State: for were not all Frenchmen children of the State? and was it not the clear duty of the parent to provide food and clothing for their wants? The echo of the same cry, of the same doctrine, is heard in this country; for Mr Frederic Harrison denounces capitalists and employers of labour. He desires to improve them off the face of the earth. He summons workmen to insist on *l'organisation du travail*. He is not satisfied with the immemorial world-spread practice that those who are in want of goods, or wish to be the manufacturers of them, should employ on wages those who have hands and skill to make them. A loftier theory must be thought out and enforced. The working classes and their employers must live by rule, must have their relations planned out by a grand commercial philosophy. The hated masters must disappear, and the wealth necessary for the existence and comfort of man must be created by an organised brotherhood of fellow-men. Society must be reconstructed to its very core. All that men have lived by in the past, the arrangements under which they have worked and satisfied their wants from the earliest beginnings of the human race, must be thrown aside as worn-out rubbish. *Novus sæclorum nascitur ordo*. The men who have nothing but their labour to sustain life with are to be raised to a position they never dreamt of: a social philosophy, which is the last and capping invention of this enlightened age, has devised new relations between human beings which are to transform life into a something never as yet even conceived by the imagination. There is to be no such thing as country: patriotism is to be expelled as narrow selfishness: a man is not to love his

fellow-countrymen ; he is to rise to something infinitely higher. He is to become a cosmopolitan being : he is to grasp into his affection the whole world, the entire race of mankind : and as astronomy advances in its discoveries, he will soar to the heavens, and embrace the inhabitants of the moon with his affectionate arms. All these marvellous transformations are to be accomplished by theory, by philosophical doctrine, by the light of new intuitions, by the revelations of the modern intellect.

But, in this country at least, the one department of society which has been invaded in force by theory is land. Here the modern genius loves to undo and to rebuild ; here it delights, out of the depths of its inner consciousness, to dig up doctrines of unrivalled compass and power. Land, it cries, never can belong to any other owner than the State : it can never pass into private property : it is by its own nature inalienable—as incapable of being transferred to any other than the State, as a man's eyes or arms can be made over to another. Every landowner is a usurper, whether by inheritance or his own personal misdoing. To dispossess them is the most imperative duty incumbent on statesmen. It is the darling hope of these discoverers to implant this feeling deeply in that mind whose receptivity of new ideas was never equalled, the mind of Mr Gladstone. Every man in the kingdom has the right conferred on him by the charter of his existence to feel that he is an owner of a portion of this island : and the will of the sovereign people must give a substantial realisation to this feeling. A beginning is to be made forthwith by calling on every landowner in the nation to give an account of those profits which neither his toil nor his capital have raised. He is

to dissect his gains under the eyes of jealous representatives of the people : he is to compute how much of his profits are due to the growth of the population, and he is to hand over to the Exchequer gains of which he has been hitherto the purloiner. When his great reckoning has been accomplished, what is now only held up as doctrine, will be brought to pass as fact ; and every one invested with the dignity of manhood will be installed in the name of theory as a peasant proprietor. Here satisfaction will be done to the peremptory doctrine that the possession of land is subject to the condition that the utmost advantage shall be derived from its culture ; for will not these untiring sons of toil extract harvests from the soil before which the products achieved by the skill, the capital, and the energy of the once famous tenant-farmers of England and Scotland, will hide their diminished heads ? And as to bequests, settlements, entails, primogeniture, they are to be swept away at one fell stroke, and then we shall see what sort of a life high doctrine will procure for us. It is true that land sells freely as it is ; that few countries, if any, in history, have ever exhibited such efficient culture as the British nation ; that the instances of estates inadequately developed, from the unwillingness of life-tenants to improve, are infinitely trifling when compared with the general agriculture of the kingdom : but then we must think how huge will be the satisfaction of standing on pure theory, and of the absence of that pain which every intellectual man of the nineteenth century must feel when he sees practice jarring so disagreeably with philosophy.

One region still remains in which theory is rampant with the most uncontrolled freedom. A large and compact body of enthusiastic men,

in what was once considered to be dry, sober, unspeculative England, have conceived what, for its extravagance and the vehemence with which it is propounded, merits the distinction of being classed as the antipodes of communism. Communism would place every man and woman in the nation under the feet of the State—that is, at the mercy and under the dictation of the few who held the reins of power: the theory of the Nonconformists of England attributes the right to every member of the community to forbid every law and every institution which may not be agreeable to his taste. The first theory absorbs every human being into the State, destroys his liberty, challenges his very right to exist, and subjects every hour of his life to the regulation of a central tyrannical power. The second, the doctrine under whose cover the Dissenters advance to the enforcement of secular education, refuses to the State all will, all control and care, all power of constructing a single arrangement for carrying into practice a single national desire. Our lot is cast upon strange times, when every newspaper daily summons us to face such tremendous theories. The modern doctrine of religious equality, as conceived at the present day by the Nonconformists, contains a whole system of political philosophy. They seem to be profoundly unconscious of the revolution in political theory which their demand implies. They are jealous of the Church of England; they resent the hold which it has upon the nation, not because it teaches error, but because it is an institution to which they do not choose to belong. They thought that they had inflicted a mortal stab on it two years ago, and they are astounded and dismayed to see that, boomerang-like, the weapon they hurled at another has returned

back upon themselves. They were not prepared to find that the vitality and energy of the members of that Church has extracted from the education law the means for vastly-increased action on the people; and then, under the agony of these irritated feelings, they lift up their voices with the fierce utterance of a political theory, which, if logically carried out, would reduce the nation to anarchy.

Such is the tendency of the modern world: it flies to theory whenever it has an object to attain. It matters not how vast, how novel, how unlimited, how baseless the doctrine may be, it is instinctively felt that ideas are the all-powerful leverage for the destruction of anything which exists, and which it is sought to destroy. A general principle is brought to bear upon it; its authority is pronounced to be undeniable; the pure reason proclaims it, and the inheritance of the past must bow and pass away. Investigation and discussion are scorned as unneeded and out of place; for does not the truth shine on the universal understanding by its own light? But it is not only as battering artillery that ideas are employed; they are still more widely used as instruments for the gratification of passion. Every one who has an object to gain, a hatred or a cupidity to satisfy; every man who has conceived some darling vision of a political future in which the human race shall obtain unconceived bliss by submitting with blind obedience to his oracular utterances, at once formulates an idea, expands it out into a principle, proclaims it in speeches and newspapers, and calls upon society to transform itself into harmony with its inspiration. The manufactory of these ideas is carried on with no small cunning. The idea selected for command is invariably the contradictory of some practical grievance

in the thing whose destruction is desired. It is a skilful application of the mighty art of fallacy. No living thing, no man or institution, is free from flaw: some defect discloses itself in every construction of mankind: the revolutionist pounces forthwith on the weak place, builds a theory which shall cause the particular evil to disappear, and then gets the world—for scant is the intelligence of the multitude—to believe that some wonderful principle has been discovered, which will cause not only this special blot in actual institutions, but all sorrow and misery, to vanish. Thus, some masters at times will be oppressive to their people: down with masters, and every one his own master. A Legislative Chamber, or even a House of Commons may occasionally go wrong: the universal Republic will be the remedy, with dictatorial power concentrated in the selected and intelligent few. A Dissenting minister finds he does not count in society for as much as the educated Churchman: away with the Church, and then all will be esteemed alike. Wages will at times sink below the point where every humane man would wish them to stand: let wages be an abomination, and let every man, however penniless, be a partner. Parliament may at moments be less sensitive to the feelings of brother men than it ought to be: universal suffrage will teach it the rights of humanity, only agricultural labourers must have no vote, because they might not share the ideas of the towns. An indiscreet schoolmaster may have been caught out in attempts to proselytise: let no schoolmaster henceforward have anything to do with religion. The rule of contraries constitutes the whole stock of these philosophers: take the opposite of the bad you find, it must be the good. Is it not clearly the destiny of the hu-

man race to oscillate for ever between political extremes, to try one thing, and then its contrary? And will not thus the greatest happiness of the greatest number be realised? And when the fulfilment of the grand law falls in exactly with one's desires, and brings one from the bottom to the top of society, is not the process perfectly delightful?

Each revolving age has its own special evils: for out of every position of human affairs the imperfection of man's nature is sure to evolve its own inevitable products; and it is not difficult to perceive those that afflict our contemporaries. Political philosophy has sunk to a fearfully low ebb in England, and in its place we encounter the domination of ideas. The greatest of all political truths, that each group of human beings called a nation historically takes up some definite form of association and government, and that its future must be the expansion in one shape or other of the original construction, is rapidly disappearing; and with the loss of the historical and critical basis, theories are but chance-work, and unsettlement the inevitable result. Progress by ideas—that is, by theoretical assumptions—is a process in the highest degree precarious. The great people whose noble inheritance of liberty, wealth, power, and moral worth has been transmitted to us as the instrument of our own happiness and a trust for all coming generations, built up the glorious edifice by the successive efforts of a long series of years. No finer specimen of development can be pointed to in any science, whether moral or scientific, than the English Constitution: and it will be woe for us if ever we forsake the path on which such magnificent triumphs have been won. The unvarying course pursued, till these latter days of theory, has been the working

on fixed lines, the development of pre-existing elements, the correction of evils disclosed by experience, the constant search for a higher harmony, by the elimination of what was discordant, and the acquiring a wider and stronger influence for what was excellent. There was one master-idea in this process, as profoundly political as it was philosophical, — the principle that it is denied to human nature to found an absolutely new society upon doctrine — that neither the intelligence to frame such an ideal structure, nor the practical ability to work it out, has been granted, either to a selected few or to the masses of mankind. And if this is the fundamental law of human existence as carried out in nations, there can be no greater folly, no practice more radically unphilosophical, no course of action more sure to land men in error and disaster, than to dig up out of the depths of the reason some general formula which shall reconstruct associated life, the only possible life of man, from its foundations. The English people—the great English people—during continuous ages, have profoundly known and revered this central truth. They have worked all along on a Constitution whose ideal was really, if dimly, present to their imagination; which furnished them with political doctrine, with rights, with methods of action and progress, but always with a well-marked continuity of development. Not that any single element of that Constitution was unalterably fixed, and perpetually held to be incapable of change. The monarchy of Edward is not the monarchy of Henry VIII. nor of Henry II.; nor is the House of Commons of our time the identical House of Commons of Elizabeth or Charles I. Change there always has been, and is still; but then it is change upon system, upon remodi-

fication and rearrangement, upon a preservation of the general type, upon the conservation of a genuine affinity between institutions separated from each other by centuries. Hence the English people have at all times been conservative and progressive; altering what needed amendment, whether slowly or promptly, remedying practical defects, but never suppressing a king because a republic is a finer ideal than monarchy, nor extinguishing Parliament because it occasionally fell into folly. Thus they reared a great nation, which marked its course through time by great deeds; which has secured an amount of abiding liberty which no other country has accomplished; which exhibits a history full of noble examples, and has secured a degree of happiness which theory may promise to outdo, but which no other nation or form of government has actually surpassed.

But do not evils abound on every side? we shall be triumphantly asked. Is there not much not only to be improved, but positively to be got rid of? Does not the fact that certain forms of mischief cannot be rooted out of the British Constitution furnish a strong presumption in favour of trying something radically new? Assuredly not, is our reply: we deny the presumption resolutely. Before the new structure is commenced, a new principle for its justification must be produced; and we say that the naked existence of evils constitutes no such principle. We affirm that mankind has never marched along this road, and for the precise reason that it cannot: nations cannot be moved out of one general constitution into another, as men change their houses. Men of ideas can foist a new principle into a constitution; but it will be a new piece in an old garment: it will not work harmoniously; it

opens up a downhill road to chaos. But still, the new prophets will urge, nations, like individuals, can be gradually transformed by long-continued training: insert one new principle at a time, and in the course of years a new political species will be created. That is possible, no doubt; though even then the inserted piece must bear some fitting relation to the old edifice, if it is not to destroy its equilibrium, and bring it down to ruins. But if such a process may be practised under other circumstances, it will not suit our age. The thinkers and philosophers of our day are not distinguished by patience. Proposal rapidly follows proposal: theory is accumulated on theory; all thought of making the new fit in with the old is lost, and what the final result is, let the France of to-day tell. There theory is rampant all round; every man has a doctrine—a principle—a system of government which he proclaims under the authority of infallibility. The pure reason cannot err, and the light which shines within each man is the pure reason itself. And what is the *dernier mot*, the ultimate issue of the splendour of speculative truth? Impotence—dire and prostrate helplessness—incapability of devising a single instrument of government which will work—the refuge of the destitute, the provisional. And this fearful anarchy is not an accidental product, a chance visitation sent from some angry god; it is a necessary and logical consequence of the multitude of ideas, of the loss of practical experience, of the absence of political judgment and the aptitude for accomplishing political ends, which it generates. The ship of the State has broken away from its moorings, or rather it has lost them, for they have rotted away, and it lies a heavy hulk on the waters, the sport of every wind.

And let our regenerators take a warning, if they are ever capable of learning a lesson. If there is a principle which seems more utterly exploded than another, more entirely buried with the past, an ancient relic only capable of exciting curiosity by its strangeness, it is the principle of the divine right of kings, of the gift by the Creator of the world of certain nations to specific families. None is more fitted to provoke the supreme contempt of modern intellectuals; yet that very principle is slowly gathering strength in France, and may at some not distant day dominate the French nation. And to what cause would such a marvellous going back to the past, should it occur, be due? To the anarchy generated by ideas, general formulas, intuitions, and other contrivances, by which conceit and shallowness, however acute, seek to obtain the mastery over mankind. Human nature will avenge itself at last, even on the clever fellows; but how terrible is the havoc which may be committed meanwhile!

The contempt for experience in political philosophy can never but be disastrous. The perception of new truth is as vital in politics as it is in every other department of human life; but the vital matter is the process by which it is sought to make its discovery. Political philosophy is bound by the same rules of investigation as science. It is as rational to propound a political law *a priori* as it would be in chemistry or biology. There are no necessary truths of the reason which prescribe the rules by which society must be led. The rights of man are contained in no illumination of a clever intellect, nor in any divine charter written out for the human race. No form of government is made universal by any authority, no one identical life is

possible for diverse countries, no single right, not even the rights of liberty and of life, is commanded to any nation. Ideas propounded as rights are merely notions of expediency, nothing more; and every such idea is subject to the inevitable test of experience. The study of experience is prolific of solid improvement: theory raised out of first principles is barren, and for the most part purely mischievous. True political growth is the expansion of the constitution, or, at any rate, of the general state of a people; it is the elimination of ascertained error, the correction of detected evil, the endowing the good perceived with wider and stronger influence; and, we add it cheerfully, the infusion of a new element when it is shown to be in harmony with what already exists. It may be, nay, it is sure to happen, that as the national life rolls along, a new portion of the people acquire substantial power, and will assert itself in the remodelling of the machinery of government; but this is a process essentially different in kind from the propagation of general formulas framed upon doctrine and theory. The one is natural growth; the second is little better, except for the harm it does, than the flickerings of a Will-o'-the-wisp.

Theory is advancing upon us in England by two opposite roads. It preaches in one quarter individualism; in the other it strenuously calls for enlarged interference of the State. We are threatened with such an attribution of personal rights to every man, as would destroy the very essence of national association; and at the same time we are summoned to submit the control of our private life to the minute regulation of the State. Of the former kind of anarchical arrogation of personal rights, the demand for secular education

furnishes at the present moment the strongest instance. It is often discussed on its religious side; but justice has not been done to it as an outbreak of political philosophy. It requires to be judged in respect of the view it takes of the combination of men into nations. Its principle is, that the State is not authorised to do anything which each citizen may choose to regard as offensive; and thus it places the action of a people at the mercy of the crochets of each individual man. As the demand is formulated by the Manchester Nonconformists, every tax is *ipso facto* illegitimate and a personal wrong, which is levied for religious objects of which the payer does not approve. We can conceive consciences which believe that the teaching of the Church of England entails the perdition of the soul in the world to come being so distressed by the effects which the application of their money will produce, as to refuse to pay at all hazards. Such a position would have a certain naturalness when taken up by Roman Catholics; for with many of them Protestantism is the broad road to certain ruin for ever. But it is not the Roman Catholics who raise the outcry against the shock done to their feelings by applying their monies to rate-assisted schools: it is Protestant Dissenters, most of them orthodox, who met at Manchester; and they have never pleaded any anguish or alarm at the eternal consequences of the Church of England's teaching. Neither have they ventured to declare that education is ruined by religion—that the religious lessons of the rate-paid schoolmaster spoil the secular learning, and strip it of its value in giving a brighter future to the youthful scholar. They have urged neither the damnable character of the Church's doctrines, nor the destruction of useful learning by its inter-

mixture with the first simple principles of Christian belief. That is not their grievance: had it been, the feeling would have been respectable, even though pushed beyond the strict limits of political philosophy. The indignation of the Nonconformists has a totally different source. It is rooted in jealousy; and then can we wonder at the bitterness of the resentment and the loudness of the wrath? The Church is established by the State and they are not: the principle of religious equality, they exclaim, is violated by the difference of the positions held by the clergyman and the Dissenting minister. The religious equality, which achieved so well-earned a triumph in the past history of England stood upon very different ground, or rather was essentially of a very different nature. It was as politically statesmanlike as it was religiously noble. It claimed for every citizen the right to worship according to his belief—subject only to the single limitation that this belief shall not command and practise acknowledged immorality. The political basis of this claim was excellent. It alleged that no political end called for persecution, for the infringement of the citizen's liberty: and that consequently the exercise of the power of the majority to interfere with religious opinion and worship, being justified by no adequate object, was an act of unsound public policy, and virtually involved tyranny. Martyrs died rather than sacrifice their opinions and their integrity: and gradually public opinion became enlightened, and perceived that no interest of the State required interference with personal belief. But the men who perished at the stake did not, like modern Nonconformists, invoke religious equality; they did not challenge the right of the State to favour one set of opinions, even to

the persecution of dissentients: they stood simply on the ground of conscience, and deliberately preferred to abandon their citizenship, and life itself, rather than disown their own convictions.

The sense now attached to the phrase, religious equality, covers a different principle under the unchanged words. It is advanced as the authority for two distinct demands: first, that the State shall adopt no religious machinery whatever; and, secondly, that the money of the taxpayer shall not be applied to a single religious object of which he disapproves. Both claims rear themselves on the primary principle that an individual citizen, or in any case a minority, possess, by the gift of the Creator, an indefeasible right of veto on the action of the State. This is a pretension full of thoroughly unsound political philosophy: nay, it implies a profound ignorance of it altogether. Where in the world have the Nonconformists found this astonishing claim? What great writer on the theory of government, what statesman engaged in the government of nations, what analyst of the elements of human society, ever established such a doctrine? In what charter was such a power of veto written, such a right to dictate to the legislature of any people, be it despot or republic, how far it shall make laws and no farther? One would suppose that a nation was formed by a number of men meeting together and contracting with one another to make a people, upon covenants mutually binding: as if the first whiff of force would not brush them away as cobwebs. But we repudiate force, the prohibitionists might reply; it is barbarous, ignorant, and violent: we stand on reason, on good sense, and plain obvious truth. By all means, we answer: all men wish to have truth

on their side: even Nero probably believed that he was emperor for the good of the people. But this is not political philosophy; for every one holds that his truth is the true truth; that his opinion is pure reason, and his claim undeniable justice. No nation could hold together on the principle of every one being right; every one having his own way, and telling the rest of his fellow-countrymen that they shan't have theirs. Such a method would be not to live together as a people, but to tear one another to pieces, and to drive every family into solitary existence. Force, the force of strength and weapons, would soon put an end to such isolation; and every organised society is founded on force. What! we hear men exclaim,—society not founded on reason and sense? No—neither now nor ever. Right reason must find its interpreter: the man who has persuaded himself into believing that he is its possessor must exhibit his credentials to be recognised by others; and if they choose to call his right reason nonsense, they will compel him to do as they wish, and not as he prescribes. His intelligence, and knowledge, and sound sense will count for nothing. It is true that these great qualities are the fountain of civilisation, the parents of all that makes life worth the living, but they count solely by their influence on the public force. All wise, humane, and progressive legislation flows from their power over the public mind; but this fact does not alter their sphere of action nor their method of working. The wisest man is nothing when everybody else is arrayed against him, even though after-ages trace their enlightenment to the rays which he shed over an unfeeling age. Socrates has been the author of endless good to mankind, but the Athenians put

him to death. The Nonconformists may possess all the light which is to illuminate the civilisation of the future; but till the public opinion of England recognises their inspiration, it is idle for them to claim the right of saying to the people of England that they are forbidden by the Dissenting mind to have an Established Church, although they may think it a beneficial institution for the country.

But the Nonconformists may still rejoice that their feelings are hurt by the existence of an Established Church—that they are depressed by it into a sectarian inferiority, and that in no case can the State be justified in thus wounding their sensibilities, and instilling into the minds of a portion of its subjects a painful sense of humiliation. We concede readily to the argument that a painful feeling of inferiority is a wrong far exceeding most pecuniary hurt, and that it is the clear duty of the State to avoid the infliction of a suffering which would be in its nature unjust. But the question is, whether the measure which is accused of hurting the feelings is justified by valid reasons of public policy. The mere existence of the painful feeling is not sufficient by itself alone to forbid the action of the State in a matter which it deems important. Were it so, then a monarchy would be unjust and a wrong, because it would hurt the feelings of the Republicans; and this thought lies at the foundation of the position taken up by French Republicans, that the Republic is above universal suffrage. The principle is identically the same in both the French men and the Manchester men: they ground their demand in both cases on the inequality created by the system they oppose; the French men resenting the political inequality engendered by monarchy and its inevitable appendages, and

the pain which they are thereby made to suffer from their inferiority; the Nonconformists applying the same doctrine to the inequality which they attribute to an Established Church, and to the sense of humiliation which they affirm it produces in their minds. Are the Manchester Dissenters prepared to concede the equality demanded by the French? Are they ready to call for the universal Republic, the thorough suppression of the English Constitution, and manhood suffrage, not as politically expedient, but as the irresistible right of those who stand on equality? If they are not, they are lost as against the alleged inequality created by an Established Church; it is impossible for them to bring a single principle of political philosophy which would overthrow the position of the French Republicans and not upset their own.

Equality, if a matter of absolute right, must be carried out through every detail of the public life of the nation: if it is valid for itself, by its own nature, against preference and privileges in one department of social life, it must be equally valid in all. The instant that public policy, expediency, the general welfare, is held to justify inequality in one point, it is clearly admitted that they may equally justify it in another. The Nonconformists, consequently, must set up the French doctrine of universal equality; or, if they plead the principle against the Church and Church schools only, they commit themselves to the necessity of proving the expediency of its application against them on the merits of these institutions. They cannot overthrow them by merely showing that they involve inequality; they must go further: they must prove that it is an impolitic and inexpedient inequality. Upon such a foundation the argument will take

quite another form than it did at Manchester. The policy of an Establishment must be reasoned out; its abolition can no longer be clamoured for by mere outcry about inequality.

The Nonconformists will now fall back on their second principle: they will urge that religious inequality differs from every other; that it is intolerable in itself; a wrong which needs only to be stated in these two words to become evident to every one. But in making use of the phrase religious equality, they fall into the very common fallacy of transferring the associations connected with one application of the same language to another. Religious equality, in the old sense, the right of every citizen to have and practise his own religion without interference from the State, is universally conceded. It has been pronounced a sacred right; but no such admission has been given by public opinion to equality in the sense that the State shall have no religion. If the public feeling of a nation holds that the recognition of a religion and its profession by some kind of establishment materially promote the welfare of the people, it cannot be prohibited by the simple affirmation that the State labours under a natural and imperative obligation not to think or know anything about religion, because it would end by setting up an inequality between different portions of its subjects. Oh! but preference, exclaim the Nonconformists, in religion is something wholly different in kind from preference and privilege in secular matters. A man may submit to pay money for a king, though he is persuaded that monarchy is enormously inferior to a Republic; but to support a religion which is erroneous touches the conscience. We cannot subscribe to

propagate religious error; and the State lies under a positive obligation to respect our scruple. All this is pure exaggeration; it is unreal and untrue. All classes of the community are compelled, in one form or other, to pay taxes for the maintenance of what they disapprove. Many think wars wicked, some more especially wicked than others. Has it ever been heard that wars were to be forbidden for the satisfaction of these persons, or that they objected to pay taxes which war had imposed? Others hold that the traffic in intoxicating liquors is clearly immoral. Have they claimed the right to have beer-houses put down solely out of respect for their own feelings, and in open opposition to the opinion of the majority of the nation? Others object on principle to capital punishment. Has it ever been known that they have demanded as a right that they should not join in the payment of the jailer and the executioner? It is no doubt conceivable that a religion very revolting to the feelings of a part of the community should be endowed with the public authority of the State—and such were the feelings of the first Protestants respecting the Roman Catholic religion; in that case, to protest and preach against it is the sole course available, and to suffer whatever penalties the law may impose on such conduct. But it would be idle to assert that the religion of the Church of England is offensive to many persons in this country, at least amongst Protestants: and the Roman Catholics, who might consistently allege that that religion led to the destruction of souls, are not the men who raise this demand, that no subject shall be bound to pay taxes that may support a State Church. The plea of conscience has therefore no rational

foundation to sustain a claim that the State shall have no religion because there are some persons who have to contribute to a religion which is not theirs. But it is worse still: it is anarchical in its very nature. It misunderstands the nature of all national associations: it knows not that in no people can every man have his own way, even negatively in the way of prohibition. It fails to perceive that a nation implies a common action of the men who compose it—a public will, public and common objects, purposes which can be accomplished only by the collective strength of the whole society. Man was born to live in such an association: for he alone amongst animals requires the assistance of his fellow-men to render life possible. To concede to a minority of men an absolute right, built not on public policy or assigned grounds of expediency, but on personal feeling and opinion, to prohibit any action which the society in its aggregate considers to be important, is to found anarchy, to legalise lawlessness, to injure the power of making laws, and to place the common existence of the people at the mercy of individual opinion. Such a right can find no place in any sane political philosophy, no more than the proposition so vehemently asserted by some Frenchmen, that the Republic is above universal suffrage.

But this is not the whole of the case against the position taken up by the Nonconformists at Manchester. It might seem that they made only a negative claim, that they asked only that nothing should be done by the State—no tax be levied upon them which shocked their religious feelings. This is only one side of their contention. There is another and far more objectionable side to it: the positive action they

carry out, the dictation which they practise upon others. Their doctrine of religious equality not only assails the desire which a people may have to accomplish public ends by the establishing of a national Church; it does more: it tyrannises very unmistakably over the liberty of their fellow-citizens, even though these may constitute the great bulk of the nation. By far the largest number of Englishmen desire that the education of their children shall include religion—for they regard, as Christians, that morality cannot be adequately impressed on the conscience without religion. Most of them also are profoundly aware that religion is not a separate affair, like arithmetic or drawing, embodied in some catechism, and to be got up as any other branch of knowledge, but that it pervades the whole of man's being, and guides his moral judgment over every part of his conduct, as well as the recorded actions of other men. The Manchester Congregationalists know perfectly well that religion consigned to a special department of the mind is not true

religion: and none more than they would vehemently recoil from an education of their own children which relegated religious teaching to a limited portion of the day, and never referred to its lessons, the feelings it inculcates, the tone of mind it inculcates, at any portion of the school-time. Yet these very men demand, in the name of respect for their own feelings, that the children of the poor shall have a form of education which they would carefully repudiate for their own. Their negative claim thus becomes an instrument of very positive tyranny. They preach secular education: let them study it themselves. Let them devote some serious thought to the examination of the essential elements of that social organisation called a nation. Let them frame a political philosophy which will bear the light of day: let them think it out completely, and then they will be able to see whether the right of religious equality, as interpreted by them, forms any part of that secular knowledge of which they are the champions.

GENERAL LEE.

MORE than a year has passed away since the death of General Lee. In ordinary times such an event could hardly have happened without reviving, if only for a moment, much of the eager interest with which, between 1861 and 1865, the Old World watched the Titanic Civil War of the New. But during the October of 1870, when General Lee breathed his last, the siege of Paris absorbed the thoughts and engrossed the attention of civilised mankind. Little or no notice has therefore been taken in England of the death of one who, when his career, character, and military genius are better known and understood, will, in spite of his defeat, be pronounced the greatest soldier, with two exceptions, that any English-speaking nation has ever produced. Upon the other side of the Atlantic circumstances have conspired to obscure the great deeds and spotless purity of the noblest son to whom the North American continent has hitherto given birth. A 'Life of General Robert E. Lee' has indeed appeared, from the pen of Mr John Esten Cooke, upon which we propose to make a few comments; but it can in no sense be regarded as more than an adumbration of the man whom it professes to delineate. Public expectation on the other side of the Atlantic anticipates much from a biography, already too long delayed, of which Colonel Marshall, who for four years served at General Lee's right hand in the position which corresponds in European armies to our Chief of Staff, is to be the author. But in both sections of the reconstructed

Union the passions and animosities of the American War are still so much alive that it is a political necessity for General Lee's conquerors to darken his fame and sneer at his achievements. In most of the public papers and utterances which have issued from the victors in the fratricidal strife, the writers and speakers have thought it expedient to brand Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and Jefferson Davis as men worthy to be ranked with Benedict Arnold and Aaron Burr. Thus, for example, the Board of Visitors, to whom was committed the annual supervision of the United States Military Academy at West Point—of which Board the present American Envoy to England, General Schenck, was president—employ the following language:—

"Among many improvements"—such are the questionable words of this singular document—"made during the administration of the present superintendent, is one of peculiar and touching interest: it is the device of placing on the walls of the chapel neat marble tablets, or mural monuments, inscribed with the names of those dead army officers who in the past have been made illustrious by rank or gallant deeds of arms, or have fallen in battle. It was a happy thought to be executed at this particular place. It is most fitting that the United States Military Academy should be made to perpetuate such names and histories; thus keeping before the eyes and present in the memories of young men educated here this noble example of faithful service and devotion to our common country.

"The Board recommend that the tasteful and enduring record thus begun shall be continued, and that means be furnished to extend the same mark of respect to all the officers of our army,

regulars and volunteers alike, who have suffered and fallen in the war just closed in a glorious and successful struggle to vindicate the honour and maintain the life of the nation. Happy for the recreants who fought to destroy their Government, if, in the light shed from such a brilliant roll of the faithful, their names and treasonable career could be thrown into deeper shadow of oblivion !”

Let us compare with this unseemly and unnecessary passage the following extract from General Badeau's excellent ‘Military History of General U. S. Grant.’ He tells us that—

“When the first shot was fired at Fort Sumter—the shot which inaugurated the American Civil War—the standing army of the United States numbered 15,433 men, or 10 regiments of infantry, 4 of artillery, and 5 of cavalry. It was officered by Southerners as well as Northerners. Out of 1074 officers 270 were of Southern birth, embracing a fair share of the talent and distinction of the army. Two hundred and two of these espoused the Southern cause. When it became apparent that war was inevitable, they resigned their commissions, and offered their swords to their own section, *holding the authority of a State paramount to that of the Union*. They were followed into secession by fifty others from Northern or border States, most of whom had married Southern wives or acquired Southern property.”

Nothing can be fairer than the reasons by which General Badeau explains the secession of General Lee and his Southern fellow-officers. To many of them the struggle to decide whether their State or the Union claimed priority of allegiance was no less painful than the struggle—so beautifully described in Clarendon's ‘History of the English Rebellion’—which raged in the breast of Falkland. “When there was any overture or hope of peace,” says Lord Clarendon, “Falkland would be exceedingly

solicitous to press anything which he thought might promote it; and, sitting among his friends, often, after a deep silence and frequent sighs, would with a shrill and sad accent ingeminate the word *Peace, Peace*; and would passionately profess that the very agony of the war, and the view of the calamities and desolation the kingdom did and must endure, took his sleep from him, and would shortly break his heart.” No one who served by General Lee's side during the war, or who had occasional opportunities of conversing with him during the five years of life which remained after his surrender at Appomattox Court-House, can entertain any doubt that he suffered no less agony of heart than the young and accomplished Royalist who died on the field of Newbury. But to brand him with infamy, and call him a traitor and a recreant because he deemed it his duty to fight for the State which sent him to West Point and paid for his education, is unworthy of so brave and sensible a man as General Schenck. Even in the report of Lieutenant-General U. S. Grant upon the armies of the United States in 1864 and 1865, he has but one faint word of approbation to bestow upon the adversary who, having fought with unshaken fortitude and self-denial throughout the war, became the most patient and loyal of citizens when his sword was surrendered. “General Lee's great influence throughout the whole South,” says his conqueror, “caused his example to be followed; and to-day the result is, that the armies lately under his leadership are at their homes, desiring peace and quiet, and their arms are in the hands of our ordnance officers.” The patience, humility, and moderation of General Lee during the five closing years of his life extorted frequent admiration from his late antagonists,

but have hitherto won from them no concessions to his crushed and oppressed brethren and sisters in the South. The remnant of the armies over which he was supreme "desired peace and quiet" as intensely as their Northern conquerors; but after they had for three years been ruled by the sword, and despoiled by "carpet-baggers" and negroes, it was natural that the discontent of a brave and proud people should here and there break out in a few spasmodic flutterings of disaffection. In one of his speeches to his constituents, Mr Grant Duff, himself an ardent Northerner, told them that

"Reconstruction is the readmission of the seceding States to political communion with the States which remained true to the Union, and the restoration to them of those powers of self-government which, forfeited by the war, had been replaced since their defeat by military rule. But how was this to be done? The majority of the United States Legislature decided that each of the States should choose a new constitution for itself, and that in choosing it the old planters, the 'mean whites,' and the ex-slaves should all have an equal voice; but that all the principal rebels, and the whites who would not take a test-oath, should be excluded. The effect of this has been, that constitutions for the Southern States have been prepared in the North, and voted at the South over the heads of white men by negro majorities."

Mr Anthony Trollope, whose Northern proclivities during the war were not less pronounced than those of Mr Grant Duff or Professor Goldwin Smith, calls reconstruction,

as understood and practised by the Republican party—

"A provision for a war of races, with the express object of keeping down a people, in order that that people may be debarred from all political power in the empire. In Georgia, the black men, on those lines of reconstruction, would have the power of making all laws for the restraint of the white. But it has never been intended to intrust this power to the negroes; the intention is that, through the negroes, all political power, both State and Federal, shall be in the hands of members of Congress from the North—that the North shall have its heel upon the South, and that the conquered shall be subject to the conquerors. *Never has there been a more terrible condition imposed upon a fallen people.* For an Italian to feel an Austrian over him, for a Pole to feel a Russian over him, has been bad indeed; but it has been left for the political animosity of a Republican from the North—a man who himself rejects all contact with the negro—to subject the late Southern slave-owner to dominion from the African who was yesterday his slave."

The oppression of the South, which is to-day far worse than when these words of Mr Trollope were written, wrung General Lee's affectionate heart as the loss of Calais weighed upon the spirits of our own Queen Mary. Lord Macaulay tells us that "no creature is so revengeful as a proud man who has humbled himself in vain;" but during the concluding years of General Lee's life, no symptoms of passion or vindictiveness were discernible in his daily bearing.* He mourned over

* As an evidence of the present state of affairs in South Carolina, we quote the following passage from a letter written in November last by a resident of that State, whose character for truth and honour is unimpeachable. He says—

"One of my brothers has been arrested and thrown into the common jail of the United States soldiers without charge or accusation, without form or warrant of law, without the shadow of right or justice. Before the suspension of the writ of *habeas corpus*, profound quiet prevailed in this section of the country. Men were pursuing their avocations in the most peaceful manner, and a season of prosperity was beginning to dawn upon us; but now words are almost inadequate to describe the reign of terror existing among us. Bands of United States soldiers are riding the country, arresting citizens by wholesale, tearing them from their homes in the night-time, terrifying

the abject and oppressed condition of South Carolina until death freed his soul from the suffering which crushed him. Mr John Esten Cooke makes it abundantly evident that he died from a broken heart. But in order that the virtues of a singularly pure and noble character may not be unrecorded in England, we desire to follow Mr Cooke through some of the most notable passages of his hero's life, and to do what in us lies to make Robert E. Lee's memory a precious possession wherever the English tongue is spoken.

"The Lees of Virginia," says the volume before us, "spring from an ancient and respectable family of Essex in England," whose ancestor came over to the fast-anchored isle with William the Conqueror. One member of this family, Lionel Lee, accompanied Richard Cœur de Lion to the Holy Land, and displayed special gallantry at the siege of Acre. The first of the Virginian Lees, Richard by name, was an ardent monarchist, and left the old country in the troubled times of King Charles the First. "It is not certainly known," says Mr Cooke, "whether he sought refuge in Virginia after the failure of the King's cause, or was tempted to emigrate with a view to better his fortunes in the New World." Whatever may have been his motive in repairing to Virginia, Richard Lee undoubtedly

brought with him from England a number of followers and servants, and took up extensive tracts of land in the Old Dominion. Among the manor-houses which he there built or commenced, was one at Stratford, in the Virginian county of Westmoreland—within which county George Washington himself was born. This house having subsequently been destroyed by fire, was rebuilt—Queen Anne herself having been a contributor to the fund subscribed in England and in the colony for its re-erection—and became at a later date the birthplace of Richard Henry Lee, and of his distinguished son, Robert Edward. Richard Henry Lee, the father of the great Confederate general, was one of Washington's best subordinates; and under the *sobriquet* of "Light-Horse Harry," gained conspicuous fame as a cavalry general in the revolutionary war of the American colonies against England. In a letter written in 1789, George Washington conveys his "love and thanks" to Light-Horse Harry, whose admirable qualities as a soldier were always recapitulated with modest pride by his still greater son. In 1869 General R. E. Lee published a new edition of his father's 'Memoirs of the War in the Southern Department,' to which he prefixed an unostentatious life of its author.

women and children, hurrying the prisoners off to jail, and cramming them in dungeons and filthy cells. These arrests are made without warrant. Men are ignorant of the offences for which they are thrown into jail. No explanation is given to the prisoner as to the cause of his arrest, no hearing is allowed him. The innocent and guilty fare alike. The fury of the Radicals is levelled against the best of our citizens. Old and young, grey-haired men incapable of committing outrages, mere boys innocent of crime, are arrested indiscriminately. In a time of profound peace, when farmers are engaged in gathering in their corn and cotton, we are declared to be in a state of war. We are suffering for crimes which have never been committed; we are punished for offences of which we are not guilty; we are warred upon by the United States Government on account of a rebellion which has no existence but in the imagination of President Grant, and the vile politicians who have poisoned his ears with false and malicious reports. There is no rebellion—there is no hostility to the United States Government—there is no resistance to lawful authority, either State or Federal; the reports of collisions between armed bands of Ku-Klux and Federal troops are utterly base, false, and slanderous fabrications, invented for a purpose."

Richard Henry Lee was twice married; and by his second wife, Anne Hill Carter, he had three sons and two daughters — Charles Carter, *Robert Edward*, Smith, Anne, and Mildred. The old house at Stratford, wherein the great American soldier first saw the light, deserves a few passing words of comment. It is one of those Virginian manor-houses which so warmed the heart and kindled the fancy of William Makepeace Thackeray; for in one of these, he loved to say, that it would delight him to write the history, which he always contemplated but never executed, of the times of good Queen Anne. The bricks, paving-tiles, carvings, window-sashes, furniture, and decorations of these stately old country-houses, were all transported from England to the Old Dominion. English plasterers moulded and spread the ceilings; English masons upraised the Italian mantelpieces which they brought with them across the Atlantic; English carpenters made fast the window-sashes, and set up the lintels of the doors. Their book-shelves were filled with the great English classics who flourished in the Augustan age of Queen Anne. Within the libraries of some of these houses Thackeray passed many hours, enraptured to find himself surrounded by the works of all the English authors who were most to his taste. There he again familiarised himself with the tender grace of Addison, the rugged force of Smollett; there he forgot the "wild relish and vicious exuberance of the too copious present" by bending over the pages of Swift, Pope, Arbuthnot, Bolingbroke, Walsh, and Granville; and there for the first time he became acquainted with the 'Memoirs of Colonel Byrd of Westover,' the founder, during George II.'s reign, of Virginia's

beautiful capital at Richmond. The very bricks, paving-stones, and window-frames of Westover, Brandon, or Stratford, exhaled an atmosphere which was fragrant to his nostrils, and enabled him again to summon into fleshly existence those English worthies of whose literature he was so fond. There he loved to rehearse that Charles II. wore a coronation-robe of Virginia silk when reinstalled upon the throne of Great Britain; and that, in gratitude for her loyalty in the hour of his abasement, he permitted the proud old State to rank thenceforward in the British Empire with England, Scotland, and Ireland, and to bear upon her shield the motto, *En dat Virginia quartam*.

The early influences of the old grange at Stratford, in which he was born, had much to do with shaping the character of General Lee.

"Critics," says Mr Cooke, "charged him with family pride. If he possessed that virtue or failing, the fact was not strange. Stratford opened before his childish eyes a memorial of the old splendour of the Lees. He saw around him old portraits, old plate, and old furniture. Old parchments contained histories of the deeds of his race; old genealogical trees traced their line far back into the past; old servants grown grey in the house waited upon the child; and, in a corner of one of the great apartments, an old soldier, grey too, and shattered in health, once the friend of Washington and Greene, was writing the history of the battles in which he had drawn his sword for his native land."

To the last hour of his life, General Lee retained the affection for trees, streams, mountains, and country associations with which his happy childhood at Stratford had imbued him. One of the last letters which he ever wrote contains the following passage:—
"My visits to Florida and the

White Sulphur have not benefited me much ; but it did me good to go to the White House"—a small country seat not far from Richmond, which came into his possession by his marriage with Mary Custis, the daughter of Washington's adopted son—"and to see the mules walking round, and the corn growing." He loved the country, the woods, the birds, and the brooks as fondly as Izaak Walton or Waterton. His favourite talk was about country life ; and nothing was so grateful to him as a chat with plain Virginian farmers. The writer of these words well remembers a ride on horseback which he took in company with General Lee upon the morning of the 7th of May 1863. The battle of Chancellorsville—which, regarded militarily, will always bear the same testimony to Lee's tactical ability as did Leuthen to that of Frederick the Great, or Salamanca to that of Wellington—had just been fought. General Hooker, at the head of what he had just called "the finest army on the planet," had retreated, in confusion and discomfiture, across the Rappahannock. If ever there was a moment when human vanity would have been pardonable and natural, General Lee might have betrayed it upon the morning of the day which followed Hooker's retreat. With little more than 40,000 men, the great Confederate captain had defeated and utterly routed a host of at least 130,000 Federals. Nevertheless, even at this intoxicating moment, not a particle of self-exaltation or conscious triumph was discoverable on Lee's features, or traceable in his conversation. Cognizant of the enormous superiority of the resources wielded by the enemy with whom he had to do, he felt that Chancellorsville, like Fredericksburg, would produce little effect upon the North, and that

"another Union army," magnificently found in every respect, would again take the field before many weeks had passed. Heart-sick at the flow of blood by which he was surrounded—his road lay over ground where the hottest fighting had taken place—and *attendri* by the recent wounds of Stonewall Jackson, from which, however, upon the morning in question, he did not anticipate a fatal result, General Lee said, in weariness and anguish, "All that I want them" (the Federals) "to do is to leave us what we are, plain Virginian farmers." There never was a man who had in him so little of the "politician," as his own countrymen understand that term. "I think," said Mr Carlisle, the well-known lawyer of Washington, a man of high character, who had known Lee long and intimately, "that he was freer than any man I ever knew from the taint of any passion or party prejudice." He stood apart from the intrigues, schemes, and guile of cities and their denizens, as though unconscious of their existence, but with quiet scorn deep-seated in his heart. He was a fine judge of character ; and his diagnosis of men and women was too keen and accurate for him to blind his eyes to the little pettinesses, self-seekings, and intrigues which daily came across him. But although he perceived, and quietly put them aside, he never betrayed his consciousness of their existence, or wounded *amour propre* by anything seeming to convey a reproach. But, after all, the most winning of his traits was the affection and confidence which, without any seeming consciousness, and without an effort, he inspired in little children. Often, in the course of the great Civil War, he would approach a Virginian farmhouse inhabited by a family of whom he knew nothing. Adored

as he was throughout the length and breadth of the Old Dominion, the fame of his approach preceded him wherever he went. In response to the cordial welcome always extended to him, he would descend from his horse and sit down for a few minutes upon the porch, accepting, perhaps, a glass of water, and possibly a square inch or two of corn-bread, but never taking anything more. It might have been imagined that the gravity and seriousness of his demeanour would have possessed little attraction for young children. But before many minutes had passed, it was invariably remarked that one or two children would be crowding round his knees, and, finger in mouth, looking up into his kind honest face. He was generally surrounded by younger, more demonstrative, and more talkative officers. But his empire over the hearts of the young, though, like all his other great qualities, unconsciously manifested, was irresistible. If it may be said without irreverence, it was impossible at such moments to forget the affection with which the Master, whom General Lee loved to serve, "suffered little children" to draw near unto His presence, and saw in them an image of that childlike faith which is the shortest and surest path to the kingdom of heaven.

One other advantage was gained by General Lee from the country life and simple tastes of his boyhood. He carried with him into the field a "superb physical health and strength"—to quote Mr Cooke's words—"which remained unshaken by all the hardships of war." The time has not yet come when the history of the great Civil War in America can be fairly and impartially written. It may reasonably be doubted whether such a history can ever be written by any one who took part in, or was an eyewitness

of it, upon either side. It is true that some of the greatest military histories of the world—those, for instance, of Thucydides, Xenophon, Sir William Napier, and General Foy—have been written by men who themselves fought in the wars which they have so ably delineated; but, with the exception of the matchless masterpieces of the two Greek historians, narratives of wars by soldiers who fought in them are never free—altogether free—from partisan bias. Traces of it are recognisable in many passages of Sir William Napier; they are of constant recurrence in the pages of his French antitype, General Foy. But whenever the story of the American Civil War is truly and exhaustively told, it will become abundantly apparent, if its chronicler does his duty, that seldom if ever in modern history has there been a struggle, firstly, upon so large a scale; secondly, which was so long maintained; and thirdly, in which the disproportion of the combatants was so great. One of England's greatest soldiers, Sir Charles James Napier, exclaims, "How much more depends upon the chief than upon the numbers of an army! Alexander invaded Persia with only 30,000 foot and 5000 horse; Hannibal entered Italy with 20,000 foot and 6000 horse, having lost 30,000 men in crossing the Alps. What did he attempt with this small army? The conquest of Italy from the Romans, who, with their allies, could bring into the field 800,000 men in arms; and he maintained the war there for fifteen years." Without maintaining that General Lee, who was neither an Alexander nor a Hannibal, had such odds against him as these two great captains of ancient history, we doubt whether any general of modern history ever sustained for four years—a far longer time nowadays than Hannibal's fifteen years

in the remote past—a war in which, while disposing of scanty resources himself, he had against him so enormous an aggregate of men, horses, ships, and supplies. It is an under rather than over estimate of the respective strength of the two sections to state that, during the first two years, the odds, all told, were ten to one, during the last two twenty to one, against the Confederates. The prolongation of the struggle is in no slight degree attributed to Mr Jefferson Davis, whose high character and unselfishness are, even now, undervalued by Confederates, and totally denied by his conquerors. The courage of the rank and file of the rebel army is refreshing to contemplate in these days, which have seen a European war between two nations equal in numbers and resources triumphantly closed in seven months, and stained by the three unprecedented capitulations of Sedan, Metz, and Paris. But, after all, the one name which, in connection with the great American Civil War, *posteris narratum atque traditum superstes erit*, is the name of Robert Edward Lee. It is not likely that any biographer or historian will ever portray him as he seemed to those who served by his side and knew him best. It is as impossible to describe as to prove a negative; and the negations of General Lee's character dwell more in the memory than the positive attributes of other men. He was never haughty, never insolent, never vain, never false, never idle, never self-indulgent, never unpoised, never uncharitable, never ungenerous. In no form did he use or touch tobacco; had no taste for liquor of any kind, and seemed never to require a stimulant. Were it possible to give a statistical record of the amount of food which, during his four crucial years of trial, General Lee consumed, it would be found

that no great captain was ever so abstemious. Of a truth, his "superb physical health, which remained unshaken by all the hardships of war," counted for much in moulding the shape of his country's history.

The biography from the pen of Mr J. E. Cooke is more successful in delineating the private and personal traits of General Lee than in tracing his public career. It is well and tastefully written, and its language is altogether free from disfiguring "Americanisms." But Mr Cooke's descriptions of battles lack fire and force, and he has none of the gifts of a military historian. Reverting to its personal reminiscences, we search in vain for any allusion to one of General Lee's peculiarities, which no one who lived much in his society could have failed to notice. We refer to his rich sense of humour—a quality which Dr Arnold, in his character of Hannibal, says is rarely wanting in great men. There was a quiet vein of unmalignant fun in 'Uncle Robert'—for thus was he always named by his enthusiastic followers—which was continually cropping to the surface, and the recollection of which often raises a smile on the lips of those who lived by his side, and remember how quaintly he loved to manifest it. The two following anecdotes will serve to illustrate its nature. About a week before the battle of Fredericksburg—that is to say, on or about the 6th of December 1862—the weather was for a few days bitterly cold. General Lee and his Staff were camping out—as usual, in tents—about three miles to the south of the Rappahannock River and the little town of Fredericksburg. There were some members of his Staff who, although young enough to be his sons, were more sensible of the cold than their iron chief. To him, as to Hannibal, cold or heat made no difference; for in both there was, as

Livy writes of one of them, *caloris ac frigoris patientia par—nullo labore aut corpus fatigari, aut animus vinci poterat*. Standing round the camp-fire upon the morning in question, and shivering before each blast of a biting wind which came from the frozen north, and reminded the sufferers that the thermometer was below zero, more than one member of General Lee's Staff was heard to mutter an aspiration for a glass of whisky-toddy, or some other alcoholic stimulant. No one noticed that the General took any cognisance, or was even aware of this half-articulate expression of a wish. But presently, emerging from his tent with a stone bottle or demijohn under his arm, he drew near to the camp-fire, and said: "Gentlemen, the morning is very cold—the kindness of a friend enables me to offer you a cordial; pray bring your tin cups and taste what I have here." There were one or two on-lookers who noticed a twinkle in the old soldier's eye, and a lurking smile upon his mouth, which taught them to anticipate "a sell." But the majority of the company hastily fetched their drinking-cups, and stood expectant round their chief. The cork was drawn, and the liquor proved to be butter-milk. Upon another occasion, two members of his Staff sat up late at night discussing a keg of whisky and a problem of algebra. Upon meeting one of them in the morning, General Lee inquired, as usual, after his health, and learned in reply that he was suffering from a headache. "Ah, Colonel," remarked the old man, "I have often observed that when the unknown quantities, x and y , are represented by a keg of whisky and a tin cup, the solution of the equation is usually a headache!"

We are tempted to linger a moment longer over some points of character which caused General Lee to be often misunderstood, and some-

times to be misrepresented. There were many to maintain that, though spotless and irreproachable, he was cold and unsympathetic, and that his immunity from human vices and frailties arose from absence of passion. The truth, however, is, that no one ever had a more human heart than General Lee. His temper was naturally quick, impetuous, and choleric, but his inexorable and ever-present sense of duty—which, as will presently be seen, he called "the sublimest word in our language"—constrained him to control every passionate impulse. Being in his fifty-fifth year when the Civil War broke out, he had already learned to check his natural tendency to cholera; but no one could have seen much of him between 1861 and 1865 without perceiving that passion was by no means extinguished in his heart. There are many who remember how, upon the morning of the 12th of May 1864, a sudden and impetuous onslaught was made, just after the break of dawn, by a picked body of Federal troops, whom General Grant launched against a salient of his adversary's lines in the forests of Spotsylvania. This salient was occupied by Johnson's division of Ewell's Confederate Corps. The Federal onslaught was a complete surprise. The redoubt was stormed at the point of the bayonet; nearly 3000 rebels were taken prisoners, and 18 pieces of artillery fell into the hands of the assailants. General Lee regarded this bit of success as being attributable to want of vigilance and courage in his own men. Instantly throwing himself at the head of a Texan regiment, he waved his hat in the air, and prepared to lead it forward. No man who, at that terrible moment, saw his flashing eyes and sternly-set lips, is ever likely to forget them. But, spurring rapidly to his side, General Gordon—one of

Secessia's noblest sons—seized hold of his horse's rein, and exclaimed: "This, General Lee, is no place for you! these are men who never failed yet, and who will not fail now." With unanimous voice the soldiers around them refused to advance until "Uncle Robert" went to the rear. Slowly and reluctantly retiring, General Lee—the light of battle still flaming in his eyes—was dissuaded from his purpose. But it would be idle to tell those who then witnessed him that his nature was cold and passionless, or that his temper, if under better control, was not, *au fond*, as impulsive as that of Washington. Certain it is, that Stonewall Jackson, Longstreet, and Stuart, who all loved Lee with more than filial affection and respect, would never permit him to be called cold in their presence. It is the more necessary to deny the truth of this imputation, since it has been repeated more than once since his death, both by friendly and unfriendly commentators upon his character. It is rebutted by all that is known of his domestic life and family affections. The following letter could never have been written by one whose heart was not warmed by the living blood of an unusually sympathetic nature. There are few passages in the English language which deserve to be more widely known. The famous lines of advice to his son which Shakespeare puts into the mouth of Polonius may surpass General Lee's letter in the beauty of their language and the worldliness of their wisdom, but they lack the Christian tenderness and purity of the words which follow. The letter was written to his eldest son, then an *alumnus* in the Military Academy at West Point:—

"You must study," writes the father, "to be frank with the world: frankness is the child of honesty and courage.

Say just what you mean to do on every occasion, and take it for granted that you mean to do right. If a friend asks a favour, you should grant it, if reasonable; if not, tell him plainly why you cannot: you will wrong him and wrong yourself by equivocation of any kind. Never do a wrong thing to make a friend or keep one; the man who requires you to do so is dearly purchased at a sacrifice. Deal kindly, but firmly, with all your classmates; you will find it the policy which wears best. Above all, do not appear to others what you are not. If you have any fault to find with any one, tell him, not others, of what you complain; there is no more dangerous experiment than that of undertaking to be one thing before a man's face and another behind his back. We should live so as to say and do nothing to the injury of any one. It is not only best as a matter of principle, but it is the path to peace and honour.

"In regard to duty, let me, in conclusion of this hasty letter, inform you that nearly 100 years ago there was a day of remarkable gloom and darkness—still known as "the dark day"—a day when the light of the sun was slowly extinguished, as if by an eclipse. The Legislature of Connecticut was in session, and as its members saw the unexpected and unaccountable darkness coming on, they shared in the general awe and terror. It was supposed by many that the last day—the day of judgment—had come. Some one, in the consternation of the hour moved an adjournment. Then there arose an old Puritan legislator, Davenport of Stamford, and said that, if the last day had come, he desired to be found at his place doing his duty, and therefore moved that candles be brought in, so that the House could proceed with its duty. There was quietness in that man's mind, the quietness of heavenly wisdom and inflexible willingness to obey present duty. *Duty, then, is the sublimest word in our language.* Do your duty in all things like the old Puritan. You cannot do more, you should never wish to do less. Never let me or your mother wear one grey hair for any lack of duty on your part."

It is always pleasant to know that good seed has not fallen upon

barren places. The young man to whom this beautiful letter was addressed, and who has succeeded his father as President of Washington College at Lexington, is, *consensu omnium*, one of the most promising and exemplary men that Virginia now contains.

Within the limits at our command, it would be impossible to rehearse the leading passages of Lee's military career, or to review analytically the constituent elements and characteristics of his genius as a soldier. That he possessed many of the natural aptitudes which go to make up the sum of a great captain, became abundantly evident during the Mexican War of 1846. Many of his comrades in the only two wars wherein Lee ever took part, were of opinion that if he had held supreme command when in his fortieth year, he would have exhibited greater qualities than he possessed when called upon at the age of fifty-four to guide the military destinies of the Southern States. Those who believe that in every field of human endeavour nature occasionally supplies what are called "heaven-born" prodigies, cannot pretend that General Lee belonged to this rare, if not hypothetical, class of beings. He was above all things a painstaking, unempirical, and scientific soldier. By constitution he was a rigid causationist, and knew as well as Napoleon that great ends are unattainable until the means which produce them have been summoned into existence. Mr Cooke tells us that his hero having thrown up his commission in the United States army, found, upon repairing to Richmond in April 1861, that the South was utterly destitute of the munitions of war essential to her protection:—

"All," he says, "had to be organised and put at once into operation—the quartermaster, commissary, ordnance, and other departments. Transporta-

tion, supplies, arms, ammunition—all had to be collected immediately. The material existed, or could be supplied, as the sequel clearly showed; but as yet there was almost nothing. And it was chiefly to the work of organising these departments that General Lee and the Military Council addressed themselves with the utmost energy. The result was, that Virginia found herself very soon in a condition to offer a determined resistance. The troops at various camps of instruction were sent to the field, others took their places, and the work of drilling the raw material into soldiers went rapidly on; supplies were collected, transportation found, workshops for the construction of arms and ammunition sprung up; small arms, cannon, cartridges, fixed and other ammunition were produced; and in a time which now seems wholly inadequate for such a result, the Commonwealth of Virginia was ready to take the field against the Federal Government."

We hazard little in saying that to this end no one contributed so powerfully as General Lee. He was the first to laugh his countrymen out of their Quixotic notion that discipline was of little or no value, and to teach them that an armed mob full of courage and enthusiasm was not an army. He induced the many hundreds of men whom the South poured into Virginia to submit patiently to daily drill, and to put their faith in the camps of instruction, which owed their existence to him. His resource, ingenuity, and inventiveness were inexhaustible, and while inspiring other men, he allowed them to receive all the credit which they claimed for their activity. If Mr Jefferson Davis had not found in 1861 such a right hand in Virginia as General Lee, it is more than doubtful whether the battle of Bull Run could ever have been fought.

There are few more striking evidences of the self-abnegation and modesty of Lee's character than the fact that, for more than a year after the commencement of the great

American struggle, he was content to stand unobtrusively aside to allow inferior men, like Generals Joe Johnston and Beauregard, to "flame in the forehead of the morning sky." Nothing was more common in the winter of 1861 and the spring of 1862 than to hear men say at Richmond that Lee was "of no account," and that Secession had gained little by his accession to her cause. Such was not the opinion of Mr Jefferson Davis, who eagerly longed for an opportunity to put him in command of the army of Virginia. At length such an opportunity presented itself, when, on the last day of May 1862, General Joe Johnston was severely wounded at the battle of Seven Pines. Upon the 3d of June, Lee assumed command of the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia. From that day forward until the 9th of April 1865, his life became a term convertible or synonymous with the history for thirty-four months of the North American Continent. Upon both sides, armies of immense magnitude fill the eye of the reader, while generals succeed to generals, strut their hour upon the stage, and then are seen no more. But the American War, as it recedes further and further into the distance, is seen to have derived its shape and form from General Lee more than from any other individual who fought upon either side. It would be difficult to speak or think of the history of Europe between 1800 and 1815 without having the tongue and brain occupied exclusively by Napoleon. Similarly, the name of General Lee has blotted out in North America all recollection of those by whom he was supported or opposed. It is very possible that if, at the end of 1862, Stonewall Jackson had been transferred to the command of that Western Confederate Army which, under Bragg, Joe Johnston, or Hood, became familiar with nothing

but disaster, Lee's fame might have been shared or diminished by that of another Virginian luminary. But impartial history will eventually pronounce that it is more impossible to regard either Grant or Sherman as Lee's equals, than to maintain that Wellington and Blucher were greater than Napoleon because they defeated him at Waterloo. If in these few pages we endeavour, however inadequately, to draw the attention of English soldiers to Lee's great qualities as a commander, especially when acting upon the defensive, we do so in the conviction that the campaign of 1864 is the finest specimen of resisting strategy that the history of any nation, ancient or modern, supplies. It deserves as well to be studied in this light by professional critics like Colonel Hamley or Colonel Chesney, as the famous campaign of Napoleon in 1796 to be viewed as a model of scientific offensive warfare. And we are but repeating the opinion of the ablest historian that this campaign of 1864 has yet found—we allude to Mr Swinton, the author of an excellent book called 'The Army of the Potomac'—when we say that, if the issue of the American War had depended solely upon the two rival armies which opposed each other in Virginia, the Stars and Stripes would never have floated above the Capitol of Richmond. Vast as were the resources in men and material of which in 1864 General Grant disposed, it was not by General Grant that Richmond was taken, but by General Sherman. If any American doubts the correctness of this view, we beg to refer him to the passage in Mr Swinton's book which describes the hopelessness and dejection of General Grant's army after their bloody repulse at Cold Harbour upon the 3d of June 1864. But, in addition to the testimony of

Mr Swinton, who served himself with the Northern army, and was an eyewitness of the deep dejection which he describes, we might easily quote many other facts which irrefragably substantiate this view, and dissipate the sophisms advanced in the case which our cousins have submitted to the Arbitrators at Geneva, that the battle of Gettysburg was the death of the Rebellion. Whenever the private letters of Mr Stanton, the War Secretary at Washington, shall see the light, it will be conceded, even by the most thoughtless of readers, that if the fate of the contest had depended solely on Lee and Grant, the great Republic would not to-day be one and indivisible.

"So gloomy," says Mr Swinton, "was the military outlook after the action at Cold Harbour, and to such a degree by consequence had the moral spring of the public mind become relaxed, that there was at this time great danger of a collapse of the war. The history of this conflict, truthfully written, will show this. The archives of the State Department, when one day made public, will show how deeply the Government was affected by the want of military success, and to what resolutions the Executive had in consequence come. Had not success elsewhere come to brighten the horizon, it would have been difficult to raise new forces to recruit the Army of the Potomac, which, shaken in its structure, its valour quenched in blood, and thousands of its ablest officers killed and wounded, was the Army of the Potomac no more."

In reference to this famous campaign of 1864, which, although Mr Swinton is its hitherto best historian, still stands much in need of a Jomini or a Napier, we have but space for the following passage from General Lee's last biographer:—

"The campaign of one month," says Mr Cooke, "from May 4 to June 4, had cost the Federal commander 60,000 men and 3000 officers, while the loss of Lee did not exceed 18,000 men (of

whom few were officers). The result would seem an unfavourable comment upon the choice of route made by General Grant. General McClellan, two years before, had reached Cold Harbour with trifling losses. To attain the same point had cost General Grant a frightful number of lives. Nor could it be said that he had any important successes to offset this loss. He had not defeated his adversary in any of the battle-fields of the campaign, nor did it seem that he had stricken him any serious blow. The army of Northern Virginia, not reinforced until it reached Hanover Junction, and then only by about 9000 men, had repulsed every assault; and in a final trial of strength with a force vastly its superior, had inflicted upon the enemy, in about an hour, a loss of 13,000 men."

When we urge upon military students the importance of giving an attentive study to this campaign of 1864, it may be as well to whet their appetite by stating the comparative numbers of the two rival armies. Lee's numbers upon the 1st of May were, as nearly as possible, 50,000 men. Within the month he was joined at Hanover Junction by 9000 more. General Grant opened the campaign in command of 141,161 men. Within the month, and in fact from the very commencement of the bloody struggle, Grant received reinforcements day by day, which amounted to more than 100,000 additional men before he crossed the James River. "Lee's army," says Mr Cooke, "small as it was, was wretchedly supplied. Half the men were in rags, and, worse still, were but one-fourth fed. When Lee met his enemy at the commencement of May, the men were gaunt, half-starved, and in no condition to enter into so arduous a campaign." We submit to all military readers that never yet did 59,000 men quit them more gloriously than these tattered and starving Southern regiments. "Never let me hear," says Sir Walter Scott, "that brave blood has been shed in

vain—it sends a roaring voice down through all time.” It is not necessary to comment upon the magnificent abundance and variety of food, drink, and munitions of war supplied to the 250,000 men who followed General Grant; but when military epicures, while familiarising themselves with every detail of Wörth and Sedan, profess themselves unable to study the irregular conflicts of two armed American mobs, we venture to tell them that, in all that constitutes true manliness, the Transatlantic Civil War far surpasses the Franco-German conflict. Nothing is easier, says the steward of Molière’s miser, than to give a great dinner with plenty of money; the really great cook is he who can set out a banquet with no money at all. General Grant in 1864 drew upon an almost inexhaustible treasury; General Lee’s account was heavily overdrawn before the campaign began. Nevertheless, it is every day becoming more and more patent that Mr Swinton was right in believing that the ragged, famished, and suffering regiments of Secessia, numbering altogether but 59,000 men, would have discomfited their 250,000 pampered and surfeited opponents, if General Sherman and his Western army had not revived the spirits and reanimated the courage of his drooping colleague in Virginia. *Victrix causa Diis placuit, sed victa Catoni.*

Having paid our tribute to Lee’s

great, if not matchless, qualities as a defensive soldier, we proceed, in conclusion, to offer a few remarks upon the causes of his failure when called upon to assume the offensive, or to turn to advantage the victories which he had gained when acting on the defensive. It cannot be doubted that the two great stains on his military reputation were, first, his omission to “use up” the Federal army of General Burnside before it recrossed the river Rappahannock after the battle of Fredericksburg; and secondly, his handling of the Confederate army in the Gettysburg campaign. Anybody who carefully studies Lee’s military genius will come to the conclusion that he was admirably bold when weak, but that he became unduly cautious when he was, comparatively speaking, strong. To our thinking, the unhappiest mistake which he ever made was his rejection of the earnest advice offered on the eve of the battle of Fredericksburg by General J. E. B. Stuart. It was the opinion of this fiery young Confederate general that Burnside’s host, huddled together in and about the little city of Fredericksburg, and with a broad and deep river, spanned only by three pontoon-bridges, in its rear, would offer little resistance if vigorously attacked on the night of the 13th or 14th of December—the battle itself, in which not more than 25,000 Confederate soldiers had taken active part, having been fought on the 13th.* Unfortunately, Lee

* The following extract from General Lee’s official report upon the battle of Fredericksburg will be read with interest:—“The attack on the 13th,” says he, “had been so easily repulsed, and by so small a part of our army, that it was not supposed the enemy would limit his efforts to one attempt, which, in view of the magnitude of his preparations and the extent of his force, seemed to be comparatively insignificant. Believing, therefore, that he would attack us, it was not deemed expedient to lose the advantages of our position. But we were necessarily ignorant of the extent to which he had suffered, and only became aware of it when, on the morning of the 18th, it was discovered that he had availed himself of the darkness of the night and the prevalence of a violent storm of rain and wind, to recross the river. The town was immediately reoccupied, and our positions on the river-bank resumed.”—Reports of the Operations of the Army of Northern Virginia from June to December 1862, vol. i. p. 43.

cherished the belief that Burnside would renew his attack; and he was satisfied that, in that event, he would have the Federal army at his mercy. But when the morrow of the battle passed without any fresh attack on the part of the Federals, it was a lamentable error on Lee's part not to have attacked shortly before dawn on the 15th. In our opinion, such an attack would have led to the capitulation of at least one-half, if not of two-thirds, of Burnside's army; and it is extremely doubtful whether it would not have ended the war. European recognition of Southern independence could hardly have been withheld if the victory of Fredericksburg had been turned into a Waterloo. No one who is acquainted with the low *morale* of the Federals after their bloody repulse before Marye's Heights, will entertain any doubt that during those three crucial days which intervened between the battle and the Federal retreat across the river, Lee had his enemy in his power. As for the Federal guns on Stafford Heights, of which the fire, according to some critics, would have decimated the Confederates, there is little doubt that their projectiles would have been equally destructive to both armies.

But if Lee's inaction after Fredericksburg was, as we have called it, an unhappy or negative blunder, undoubtedly the greatest positive blunder of which he was ever guilty was the unnecessary onslaught which he gratuitously made against the strong position into which, by accident, General Meade fell back at Gettysburg. We have good reason for saying that, during the five years of calm reflection which General Lee passed at Lexington after the conclusion of the American war, his *maladroit* manipulation of the Confederate army during the Gettysburg campaign was to him a matter

of ceaseless self-reproach. "If," said he on many occasions, "I had taken General Longstreet's advice on the eve of the second day of battle at Gettysburg, and had filed off the left corps of my army behind the right corps, in the direction of Washington and Baltimore, along the Emmetsburg road, the Confederates would to-day be a free people." There can now be no doubt that before Gettysburg, General Lee was, to use a homely expression, "too big for his breeches." Never had the Confederates been so full of fight; and on the first day of battle, the Federals who, under General Reynolds, came into collision with Stonewall Jackson's old corps, then commanded by Ewell, were driven like chaff before the wind. Lee's true policy, after reconnoitring the position into which, by the merest chance, and in no degree by his own deliberate choice, General Meade had been driven, was to have abstained from attacking his enemy. "You are at the head of an invading army," wrote Napoleon to Marmont not long before the battle of Salamanca, "and ought never to fight a battle except on ground of your own choosing. *Il n'y a ni si, ni mais*; choose your own battle-field, force your enemy to attack you upon it, and never yield it so long as one living Frenchman is left." Wise words, which it would have been well if General Lee—who, by the by, was little familiar with any of Napoleon's campaigns or maxims—had known and taken to heart during those three opening days of July which, in 1863, he passed in Pennsylvania. But even after the second day of battle, which had taught him the strength of his enemy's position, there was time for him to have reconsidered his plan, and to have followed General Longstreet's advice. We close the volume of

General Lee's life with the conviction that the contemplation of this battle of Gettysburg will for ever prevent his being ranked as a great offensive general. But, *en revanche*, when it became necessary for him to assume the offensive-defensive, he will bear comparison with any general of modern times. His tactical management of the troops which drove M'Clellan away from before Richmond in 1862, and of those which won the battle of Chancellorsville in 1863, is above all praise. But it was in purely defensive strategy that he most shone. We are willing to stand upon the campaign of 1864, and to abide the judgment which enlightened and impartial students will be constrained to pass upon it.

The fame and character of General Lee will hereafter be regarded in Europe and in America under a dual aspect. In Europe, we shall consider him merely as a soldier; and it is more than probable that within the present century we shall have accustomed ourselves to regard him as third upon the list of English-speaking generals, and as having been surpassed in soldierly capacity by Marlborough and Wellington alone. In America, when the passions of the great Civil War shall have died out, Lee will be regarded more as a man than as a soldier. His infinite purity, self-denial, tenderness, and generosity, will make his memory more and more precious to his countrymen when they have purged their minds of the prejudices and animosities

which civil war invariably breeds. They will acknowledge before long that Lee took no step in life except in accordance with what he regarded as, and believed to be, his duty; and they will hold up his example, no less than that of Abraham Lincoln, as one of the brightest patterns which they can set before their children. Let us conclude by quoting one final story which ought not to be without influence upon men like General Grant, who, although owing his elevation in life to the magnificent resistance made by the South, seems now to lose no opportunity of demonstrating his vindictive resentment against Southern men:—

“A still more suggestive exhibition,” says Mr Cooke, “of Lee's freedom from rancour, was presented in an interview which is thus described by a citizen of the North: ‘One day last autumn, the writer saw General Lee standing at his gate, in Lexington, talking pleasantly to a humbly-clad man, who seemed very much pleased at the cordial courtesy of the great chieftain, and turned off, evidently delighted, as I and my companions came up. After exchanging salutations, and in answer to my queries, the General said, pointing to the retreating form—“He is one of our old soldiers who is in necessitous circumstances.” I took it for granted that it was some Confederate veteran, when the noble-hearted chieftain quietly corrected me by saying—“He fought on the other side; but we must not think of that.” I afterwards ascertained—not from General Lee, who never alluded to his charities—that he had not only spoken kindly to the old soldier who had fought on the other side, but had sent him away rejoicing in a liberal contribution to his necessities.”’

CORNELIUS O'DOWD.

THE AMERICAN "REVOKE."

I REMEMBER, a great many years ago, to have played a party at whist with a distinguished American politician, who was my opponent and the "dummy." The game was long, and obstinately contested, and won ultimately by the American. We had been four to four, when the last heat decided the struggle. When in the act of commencing another game, my mind still dwelling on the events of the preceding one, a sudden thought struck me that my opponent must have "revoked." If I were right in my conjecture, it was of course too late to make the objection, for we were already engaged on a new party; but still, as a matter of curious interest, I thought I should ask him if it were so. "Yes sir," replied he, promptly, "I did revoke: it was the only way to win the game."

He made the avowal without hesitation or any shame, for his mode of regarding the incident was this: The penalty of a revoke is the loss of three tricks and the total inability of the revoker to score the game; but this penalty can only be imposed on discovery. If the opposite party, from any deficiency of astuteness or attention on their part, fail to detect this lapse,—if any superior address on my part enable me to blind them in regard to my transgression,—I have a right to a success for whose failure I am prepared to pay the penalty.

It was to his argument a similar case to that of a man who engages in a rebellion, the punishment of which would be death, but whose success implies the victory of a cause and great personal distinction. It is not necessary for me to say

that I do not accept this reasoning. A penalty is attached to a revoke solely because there is no actual mode of prohibiting it; and the next best thing to do is to accompany it by a fine that shall stamp it as a sort of capital offence, and make it, as it is, a high treason to the game. Of course the task of exposure is thrown upon the injured; hence it is not to be expected that the wrong-doer would prove a king's evidence.

That such a transgression should have success amongst persons of even moderate skill must naturally be a rare event, and would imply either great weariness or great inattention, and perhaps even accident superadded to secure it.

That a man may risk it on the assumption that he is prepared for the cost of failure, is pretty much on a par with the morality that makes a man take a shot at his landlord, where detection might be death or transportation.

I know well that my American opponent's logic was totally adverse to all this; and I am the more careful to say so, since, had he taken the other view of the question, nothing could have induced him to adopt the measure—that is to say, that had he not understood a revoke to be a fair and legitimate exercise of address, he would not have practised it.

I do not believe the world contains more genuine kindness, more hospitality, nor a wider benevolence, than is to be found amongst Americans; and as for that little-practised virtue called gratitude, I never heard of a people who could rival them in the recollection of even small favours. But they have one defect in

the national character, the offspring of much that is in itself commendable, but in its consequences most hurtful occasionally, and always liable to great injustice, and this is the passion for success. Let the question in dispute be a treaty or a party at euchre;—let it be a great commercial transaction, a party struggle, a vote of Congress, a new line of rail, or a game of poker;—an American throws himself into the struggle with such a headlong energy, that while in the beginning he sacrifices time, fortune, health, and would even risk life in the cause, in the end he flings away scruples, and would dare everything to win. The captain of the typical river-steamer, who sits on the safety-valve, is the national emblem; "Burst but beat them," might be the legend.

The distinction which a man acquires in America by "smartness" has lately received some startling illustrations, and we have seen with what more than mercy a man's failings can be dealt with whose triumphant successes in trade have made him an object of wonder and envy. What is done amongst European nations by crosses and crescents, by titles and designations of honour, is in America accomplished by a certain acclamation of public opinion that proclaims a man a marvel of acuteness or a millionaire. These are the "titles" that confer honour in the model Republic; and no one who has not seen what it is to be a "remarkable man" in the States, can fashion to himself what it is to have an ascendancy above his fellows.

When the Alabama question came on for consideration, in consequence of the refusal of the Senate to ratify the Johnson-Stanley treaty, the Americans placed on record their determination not to accept a settlement which should exclude contingent and consequential damage.

We, on our side, were equally decided to pay for no other losses than those actually incurred by the four escaped vessels, and the cost imposed by pursuit of them.

It might be supposed that, with an open and palpable divergence of opinion, negotiation was actually impossible. Between the people who intended to include anything in the universe in their demand, and they who refused to pay for anything beyond a well-defined loss, there could be no common ground. The opinion seems, however, to have prevailed on both sides, that the matter might be talked over; and the more effectually to conciliate the susceptibilities of our cousins, it was proposed the discussion should take place on their side of the Atlantic.

It is not very easy to explain it—I doubt if it be capable of explanation—but the fact is freely admitted, that whether the contest be a chess contest, a rowing-match, a pugilistic encounter, a theological discussion, or a treaty, there is an immense gain to the party which has the issue decided on its own ground. How far we speculated on the benefit this courtesy on our part might have acquired for us, any more than by the flattery implied in the high rank and station of the negotiators we sent out, is not safe for me to guess. My own impression is, however, that the Americans are beginning to be less susceptible of these blandishments than they were some years back; and that as what doctors call a diffusible stimulant, a lord has lost considerably of his power as an exciting and tonic agent.

At all events it was to be a trial of sharp wits, and the Americans selected the men who were adepts in the game. It was clear enough, if one party could not talk over the other, there was nothing to be done.

A compromise alone could settle a dispute in which each side had his connections; and the discussion opened as it ought by great profession of mutual esteem, and frank concession on each side that a state of unfriendliness or even estrangement between them was alike unreasonable and unfortunate.

That the Queen herself should express sorrow at the injuries caused by the Alabama and her consort seemed a primary consideration of the American negotiators, and in the degree of importance they appeared to attach to this point, our diplomatists very possibly thought they detected the weakness of a republican people eager to obtain such a concession from a haughty monarchy. There was consummate address in the way the Yankees seemed to lay such stress upon an admission merely addressed to the susceptibility of the American people, for it enabled them without anything like abruptness to diverge into the regret felt in the "States" at the tone of unfriendliness displayed by England during the Civil War. This theme once opened, offered a vast field for illustration; for not only did it display the actual wrongs such a sentiment of estrangement might occasion, but it opened a vista to innumerable possibilities that might "grow out of" this unfriendliness. It was in this way, and by a transition so gentle as to be unappreciated, that consequential damages were at first hinted at, then expatiated, then and at last insisted on; and in this way it was the Americans managed to revoke, and we never detected it. It is quite true it was the only way to win the game; but it is equally true we have lost it. Mr Gladstone may declare the reverse: he may assert that logically and grammatically there was no ambiguity in the treaty—that is to say, he may declare that a revoke is not part of

the game; it is not, if you like, "logical or grammatical;"—but as we did not detect it, and as the cards have been shuffled and mixed, it is only fair to own that we have lost, and the best we can make of the case is, that it is only the first game of the rubber.

I have been told that when cards are produced, and a party at euchre or poker is proposed in a Mississippi steamer, a very usual question is, whether the players are to play with or without the advantages—that is, whether "cheating is in" or not: and why, in the name of all intelligence, was there nobody to ask whether the treaty was to be negotiated with or without the advantages? Mr Osborne tells us that the American Commission was composed of free, astute, and experienced lawyers—contentious lawyers, he calls them; and we had, on our side, a band of amateur diplomatists who never drew a treaty in their lives—one of whom, however, was distinguished as the man who first introduced us to competitive examinations, and illustrated, possibly in himself, the immense superiority of an intellectual measurement. The very best thing we can do is to appeal to them that we were playing on the square, and "without the advantages"—that the men we deputed to play were but muffs, not fit to encounter them—and good-naturedly to say, Don't make the stakes too high; let us pay what will mark our sense of having lost the game, and our heartfelt shame at the choice we had made of our champions.

The Americans are good fellows at bottom; and when they have had their laugh at our blundering attempt at diplomacy, I do not suspect they will want to mulct us heavily, but be satisfied with the intellectual victory, and a trifle of money to record it.

[We think it only fair to Cornelius O'Dowd to quote what he said in one of his papers, "America as an Ally," in the Magazine for August 1866, at the time when America had behaved well in our Fenian troubles. Five years ago O'Dowd wrote in our pages as follows:—

"I wish I were in a position to give power to my counsels, and I would say, Now is the time not to be outdone in generosity. Let there be no higgling, no bargaining; grasp manfully and warmly the hand that is outstretched to you, and let the feeling between the two nations be—not the conventional amity of Cabinets, but the hearty tone and affection of two kindred peoples.

"We have fishery rights to discuss, and there are some unsettled claims about the Alabama which we refuse to admit. Now is the time to settle both in a spirit that will show America we are not insensible to the value of her friendship or the force of her example. If it should be said, Whence comes this new ardour of Cornelius O'Dowd for our American cousins? How has this new light broken in upon him? Has the condition of Europe, the threatening attitude of France, the character of the man who rules her, nothing to say to this sudden and strange conversion? And my answer is, It is precisely out of these causes that I see the necessity of England having one ally who is above being subsidised, but not above being esteemed. It is because out of the present convulsions may come a war in which France, strengthening herself by the most powerful of the late combatants, may think fit to begin that work of revisal of the treaties of '15 which she has so significantly hinted at, and whose formation she well knows was in the main the work of England. It is because I see this, and that I see besides we have neither true friend nor well-wisher on the continent of Europe, I would draw closer to those who, once our narrow squabbles are forgotten, could not but regard the old country with affection, and would never stand coldly by to see her assailed by overwhelming odds, or crushed beneath the united forces of despotism."

We wish O'Dowd were in this country at present, to give us his views at full length on the present aspect of the Alabama claims. Nobody, we are sure, would be better on the quaint audacity and rapacity of the American claims, which our blundering has made such a very serious question both to this country and the United States.—Ed.]

MINISTERS BEFORE PARLIAMENT.

JUST three years ago Mr Gladstone stood in the House of Commons, in a new Parliament, with a majority of at least a hundred members at his back. The power which he could wield was greater than had belonged to a Minister since the day of the first Reform Bill. It was the boast of his supporters in the press that very many Liberal members had been sent to Westminster, pledged not so much to the pulling down of any institution in particular, as to the support of Mr Gladstone, who was relied on for thoroughly gratifying the desires of the constituencies. Thus the obedience was personal; and, as far as the House of Commons was concerned, the Minister was an autocrat. There seemed, too, to be a certainty that his power would last; for the favour of the people had been expressed so loudly, and with such demonstration, that it could hardly be withdrawn for any but the most pressing causes; and those who regarded his popularity only, and thought nothing of his previous history, deemed that his sway was established. After considering this, one stands amazed at the state of things to-day apparent. One endeavours in vain to comprehend the ingenuity in sinking, which in three years could dissipate so many and so great advantages, and lay the lately popular Minister open to the reproach of every party in the kingdom. The reverse is so great that it is hard to find a parallel to it.

For the fourth time Mr Gladstone meets, after the long recess, the same House which almost made him dictator—but how changed are the circumstances! There is not a section of the House, Conservative or

Liberal, which is not, for some cause or other, dissatisfied with the Government. All may not desire its overthrow; but all are so estranged that pretence of a Ministerial party, in a proper sense, is at an end. There are good reasons why resignation should not be forced on the Ministry,—nay, why the opportunity of resigning should not be afforded it for the present. But if it lives on through the session, it will experience a great change in its conditions of life. Its influence will be gone; its power to originate and shape measures that may be acceptable to the country will be greatly circumscribed: instead of being looked to as the index of business, or of having possession of the strings which are to regulate the phenomena of the political stage, it is like to be catechised and set upon with much freedom; where it once was absolute, it will exist by sufferance, and probably spend half the session in speaking in its own defence. These changed circumstances will cause Mr Gladstone to appear in a new character—that of a Minister in difficulties, not secure of office from day to day, pressed hard and perhaps cruelly; taunted, reviled, triumphed over. Curiosity will no doubt be excited to mark how he will deport himself in adversity,—whether he will show self-possession, dignity, patience, and ability to retrieve a commanding position; or whether, losing self-command, temper, confidence, he will fence weakly for a time, and finally succumb, not a beaten only, but a broken, Minister. There are so often in men qualities unsuspected until a demand is made upon them, that it would be presumptuous to pre-

dict how he will receive attack, or how he will retreat. In human minds, as in human persons, the combinations are infinite; and no two spirits, probably, have been exactly similar since the divine afflatus first animated a human form. Therefore it is impossible to judge with certainty of what a man may do from what other men, whose characters somewhat resemble his, may in similar circumstances have done. Yet such comparisons, with what we already have discovered to be in the man, must be our guides in judging. And, estimating by these criteria, we say that, although Mr Gladstone may astonish us by a brilliant encounter with his difficulties, and by coming out of them a victor, yet that he will astonish us very much indeed if he shall achieve those things. We fully expect a very different event. We very much doubt Mr Gladstone's ability to sail successfully on a wind, but look rather to see him baffled, weather-beaten, and finally discouraged: and we think that we have good reason for our expectation. He has had many disagreements in his public life, but we do not remember such a thing as a reconciliation in his whole career. The differences have begun in some eccentric move of his, which has called forth the remonstrance of his friends; he has not yielded, but has obstinately persisted in his act which has given offence, whether it affected matter of great or of small importance; the breach has become irreparable, and Mr Gladstone has sought new alliances. When his admirers or supporters have been anxious only to keep his course straight, so as that they might still bestow their favour on him, he has been ready to break with them utterly. Now, a

statesman in difficulties must know how to soften little animosities, to conciliate waverers, to postpone his own mere will to the desires of the body which he wishes to lead, if he would come successfully through. Hitherto, reproaches, sneers, or even good-humoured banter, have greatly irritated Mr Gladstone; and a man who cannot bear these things when he is victorious, is sure to wince and rage when they are directed to him in his trials. The very difficulties which surround the Minister—nearly all of them of his own creating—show a much greater aptitude for marring a good position than for improving a bad one. We have never observed in Mr Gladstone the temper, patience, or tact, or, above all, the constancy, necessary to a creditable encounter with many crosses. In making this forecast of what is to be expected from the Prime Minister personally, we have left out of consideration the character of the troubles which beset him, and the opinion that they followed, as the night the day, from the conditions under which he took office. On those heads we propose to speak further on; but it is time now that we say something of the affairs which are agitating the country, and of the attitude of parties.

Before to-day, no doubt, English Ministers have had to endure violent attacks, to face perplexing questions, and to wrestle with persistent contradictions; but never before, we suppose, did Ministers attract to themselves condemnation on so many counts and from so many quarters, as our present rulers whom we are contemplating. To an imaginative mind their blind perversity must suggest the leading of an evil genius. The mere catalogue of the complaints is a study.* But foremost among their blunders, and widely

* We extract the subjoined from the London 'Examiner' of the 10th February,

separated from the rest by its magnitude and the momentous issues depending on it, stands the dispute with America. If that is a difficulty to them, much more is it a difficulty and an affliction to the whole nation. We will follow the example of speakers in Parliament, and not assume that the end of this matter will be most deplorable; at the same time, we can hardly expect that they who have bungled so grievously already, are likely now to retrieve their mistakes and conduct the affair to an issue that shall satisfy the kingdom. But, refraining from prediction of the event, we say that at this moment the country is suffering from the ascertained results of the unlucky Treaty. Commerce has already received a shock from which it cannot recover while we are doubtful of the disposition of the United States in reference to the remonstrance which has been addressed to their Government. This paralysis of trade is a most serious damage, and it is due to the incapacity displayed in negotiating the Treaty. It is likely that many who took pains to place Mr Gladstone in power, are this day smarting severely for their support of him; and it is unfortunately but too likely that many others who, like ourselves, never would have

consented to put the destinies of the country into Mr Gladstone's hands, are smarting too for no fault of theirs.

The reply of the United States' Government (we take for granted that the despatch of our Foreign Minister was in substance expressive of the feeling and resolution of the nation) may of course be wholly satisfactory to us, or it may be the reverse of satisfactory, or it may correspond to one of an infinite number of degrees between the two extreme characters. It would appear from letters and printed articles which have reached this country from America, that there is still some chance that the demands of the United States, drawn up by Cabinet Ministers and lawyers, may not receive the sanction of the people. They will not receive that sanction if the people of the States in any degree respond to the feeling with which the people of England consented to the proceedings of the Commission. It can scarcely be denied to us that our endeavour was to make every honourable and rational concession, to reduce our own demands as low as possible that our moderation might be apparent, and by a great effort and acceptance of responsibility for deeds which, when enacted, we believed to be within

which will hardly be suspected of over-stating the coming troubles: "Perils without number beset the Government. They were many and great at the close of last session, and they have been accumulating during the recess. The crabbed language of Mr Gladstone on Tuesday and Wednesday, when speaking of the Alabama difficulty, shows that he expects blame for the Treaty of Washington. He is threatened with a vote of censure next week for his sharp practice in the promotion of Sir Robert Collier. If he escapes that embarrassment, he will be attacked on the Megera and Admiralty administration. If he can pilot his unseaworthy Cabinet through that storm, he will be taken to task for his avoidance of the real question of Army Reform, towards which the preliminary step was so laboriously and violently taken last year in the abolition of Purchase. If he can fight his way through this trouble, he runs a risk of being torn asunder by the combatants over the religious and ecclesiastical questions that have been provoked, mainly by the blundering of his Cabinet. Where is there safety for him? The best hope of a Government that was vaunted as the strongest ever known, is in the declaration of Lord Derby and other Conservatives, that they are not at present prepared to take office."

our rights, to bury the hatchet, and to be henceforth on such friendly terms with the United States, as people of that country and of this strongly and persistently declare that they desire to be. If the people of the States consider this, they will surely never approve of the demand from their side being so extravagant as to prohibit our proceeding with the arbitration. They will be above taking advantage of the imbecility of our unfortunate Commissioners, and will decide according to the spirit, not the letter, to withdraw all claim for indirect and constructive damages, and to submit only such demands as we understood to be within the field of the Treaty. They have had the gratification of exposing in an unmistakable way the inferiority of our negotiators: perhaps a logician or a lawyer could not refrain from having his quip at our innocent diplomatists; but having enjoyed this triumph, the American people may now, with the best possible grace, take a liberal view of the question. Instead of surrendering an advantage by not seizing the litigious opportunity, they will gain immensely in demonstrating to the world that they are influenced by great and noble considerations, so that the weakness of the Treaty will still benefit them highly. That they may be guided to a liberal and friendly decision is our earnest desire. Such a decision frankly given would do more to create on this side of the Atlantic respect and goodwill toward America, and to do away with the "geeking and galling" which both sides so deprecate, than all the blustering and bullying which can possibly be put into language. They have an enviable opportunity. We confess, however, that there is not strong reason for counting on a favourable answer. Statesmen in general, before they commit them-

selves to a course of action, ascertain the feelings of their countrymen; and we may apprehend that in this case Ministers have not acted without assuring themselves of popular support. There is danger, too, that, without intending ultimately to break with us, America may so presume upon the non-combatant disposition of our present Government as to push her demands to an extent, or in a manner, which this nation will not endure.

In judging of the action taken by America, we must remember that diplomacy is an art in the practice of which each side is expected to be able to take care of itself, and at any rate to say what it means, and to mean what it says. The idea of straining an agreement to the utmost extent that its words admit of, is unfortunately not peculiar to America; but all over the world it seems to be an understood axiom that contracts must be drawn up by persons who have a precise idea of what they desire to secure for their clients, and who are able to put that idea into clear and unmistakable words. Let the party that is inefficiently represented beware, for the young dace is a fair bait for the old pike. Last session, and long before the publication of the claims, the practised eye of Lord Cairns saw on reading the Treaty of Washington that it might be made to bear an interpretation very different from what our less wary Commissioners intended, and that it did not bar the American Government from advancing those indirect claims which it was the whole object of the Treaty to exclude. The sawney who laughed in his sleeve as he agreed to give a halfpenny for the first nail in the horse's shoes, a penny for the second, and so on, doubling the price for each additional nail, must have laughed on the other

side of his mouth when he saw the result of his idiocy neatly displayed in figures ; in like manner the complacency of our English Commissioners was probably disturbed when America presented her little bill, running to hundreds of millions, and warranted by the precious bargain under which they had flattered themselves and us that Great Britain must escape for an old song !

The time is not convenient for speculating closely on what may happen if the American answer should be decidedly unsatisfactory. Of course in that case there will be an end of the arbitration. Heaven send that there be not a beginning of the arbitration of the sword ! We never believed in the delusions of the Peace party, nor supposed that rough work could be done with a lady's fan, or fierce disorders healed by sugar and water ; nevertheless we echo the sentiment of the second of the Address of the House of Commons in reply to Her Majesty's Speech : "Should the negotiation now entered into prove abortive, it will be a matter of the deepest regret, not merely because it will leave still unsettled our disputes with the United States, but because the principle of nations determining their matters of difference by arbitration instead of by war will receive a heavy blow." Although we cannot put our trust in arbitration, we wish well to it with all our hearts, and shall be grieved, if not disappointed, to see its insufficiency demonstrated.

Let us wait, then, composedly, for America's answer. While we

do so, however, there are some matters touching us nearly in connection with this dispute which it is proper to consider. The debates on the Addresses to the Queen have enlightened the country somewhat as to the state of our negotiations and the attitude of our Cabinet. It has transpired that, although the American demands had been more than a month* in the hands of our Ministers on the day of the opening of Parliament, yet that the friendly reply had not then been despatched more than three days. It is much to be feared that it was then despatched solely because public opinion pressed peremptorily, and that neither the inclination nor the judgment of the Government approved the sending of it. If this be so, we can expect at best but a half-hearted assertion of our views. It is true that both Earl Granville and Mr Gladstone have assured us that they will look jealously after the honour of England ; and both of them, no doubt, gave this assurance in all sincerity ; but there still remains the doubt as to whether what the Ministers would call care for our honour and interests would be so called by the people. Looking back to the Black Sea question last year, we are saddened by a misgiving that when the honour and interests of the country are under discussion, the Cabinet and country are not on common ground—do not understand each other's meaning. Now it would be well, before this American dispute goes further, to have some explanation so as to bring the public and their spokesmen *en rapport* ; otherwise we may

* Mr Disraeli finally extracted from Mr Gladstone the fact that the American Case was received by our Government on the 20th of December. It was resolved on the 26th of December to have the Case reprinted for the use of Members of the Cabinet, "but in consequence of the printers being more than usually busy, it was not ready for distribution until the end of January"!!!! Mr Gladstone knows well about printing, and how he could venture to make so absurd an excuse we cannot understand.—Ed.

find that, through different interpretations of language, things have gone just as we would not have them go, and we have been landed in the very situation where we would not be. We know that most tyrannical things have been done in the name of liberty; that frightful atrocities have been committed, and in good faith too, for the honour and glory of God; then why may not humiliation and loss be submitted to for the interest and good name of England? We drifted into war once before while playing with edged tools, and Mr Gladstone, or we err, had something to do with the accident. And it is a very grave question whether, with his peculiar views of things, and the peculiar meaning which he attaches to words, we may safely trust him with our affairs in this conjuncture. The remark which we made above, that his now well-known non-combatant reputation may tempt the Americans to a point from which it will be impossible to recede, is worthy of serious consideration. Some among us may even think it expedient to wrest the reins of government from the feeble hands that hold them, and to place them under firmer control before peace-prattling launch us into war.

Looking back at the early circumstances of the dispute, we perceive with satisfaction that the opinions which we expressed last month concerning the inexpediency of sending the Commission to Washington, have been confirmed by the language used by Lord Derby in the House of Lords. His Lordship said:—

“Look how we stood when the negotiation was entered into: we were in a position which was absolutely unassailable; we had repaired what was our original error in the matter—refusing arbitration altogether; we had

offered a reference on fair and legal terms, and that reference the Government of the United States, after some delay, decided upon refusing. Why they took that step was a question for them; what is of importance is, that, having made an offer which was rejected, we had put ourselves altogether in the right. As I conceive, it was clearly our duty to remain in that position, only telling the Americans what, in justice and fairness, we were bound to tell them, that the offer which they rejected was still open for their acceptance if they thought better of it.

“My Lords, I say the root of the evil was the sending out of a special mission, avowedly intended by its constitution to show the extreme importance which we attached to getting a settlement. Whether we had a chance of making a good bargain I don't pretend to judge, but I am quite sure if we ever had we lost it, as people often lose good bargains, by showing too openly our anxiety and eagerness to conclude it on any terms.—(Hear, hear.)”

It is our duty (and we shall do it) to aid in extricating both the Ministers and the country from the entanglement into which we have been brought, as shown by Lord Derby; but it is at the same time our duty to keep, if we can, public attention fixed on the folly which brought it about. The ultimate event should not affect the country's dealing with this matter. Here we are at this moment in imminent peril of an unsought, undesired, useless strife, the consequences of which, if it unhappily come, will be a misfortune to the whole civilised world; and we have been brought into this peril by negligence and blundering. Surely the negligence and the blundering cannot in any event go unpunished! We must not allow it to be said that our peace and wellbeing may be tampered with and experimented on with impunity for the gratification of a set of enthusiasts. And there is a

point of the matter not without its significance, to which, ere we leave the subject, we would advert. Mr Gladstone marked his approbation of the acts of the Washington Commission by advising Her Majesty to raise its President one step in the peerage; thus publicly rewarding conduct which, though it may have been a service to him, was a disservice to the country. One of the juriconsults to whom a member of the House of Commons has imputed *crassa negligentia*, and to whose work another member has applied the epithet *infamous*, is at this moment enjoying honourable reward for bringing us into a condition of difficulty and danger.

The awkward position into which the country has been misdirected cannot but make every patriotic Englishman turn an anxious eye to the condition of the Army and Navy. He knows well that there is no comfort to be found in that glance, but he knows too that in this emergency he and his compatriots must not only face but deal summarily with the half-ruined Services. When we said last month that if war should threaten we should have reason to remember Mr Cardwell, we did not know how speedily our words would find an application. For three years Mr Cardwell has been treating the country to cheap Army administration; that is, he has been deliberately disorganising and neglecting our means of defence, animate and inanimate.* He has adopted measures which threaten to destroy the discipline and tone of the Army. He has brought the War Office into a state of chaos, where the temper

of the sub-departments and of the individual officials is aptly illustrated by the proceedings in a drop of water as seen under a potent magnifier. A Surveyor-General may be observed devouring an Under-Secretary; a Controller and a member of the Works' Department are rushing to the encounter; Adjutants-General and accountants are seen in deadly embrace. So far as we can understand, the eating up and fighting and squabbling result all from endeavours to shift responsibility on to other backs, every one desiring to appear free of blame in the day of reckoning which he knows must come. But what a prospect is here presented to the nation, which in a few weeks may have a quarrel fastened on it that will try its resources to the utmost! In vain we have warned our countrymen of this over and over again; in vain we have told them that every shilling saved by the cheap government would be paid for with a sovereign. Few would listen; and the great body of the people shut their understandings, and allowed themselves to be decoyed into the present perilous condition. The question now is, What is to be done? and the only answer we can make is one in general terms—viz., that the whole of Mr Cardwell's reductions and disorganisations must be revised under the close surveillance of Parliament. It is impossible that we can suggest details; it will be enough if the country be persuaded of the error and take the correction of it in hand. One crying necessity we can, however, name at once. The nation must insist upon knowing exactly the rules by which it is in-

* No man ventures to say that the reductions in the Estimates have resulted from anything but the simple process of diminishing the force and *matériel*. There has not been a pretence of exhibiting the efficiency that was to accompany the economy; and, alas! we know why.

tended hereafter to regulate promotion. It was loudly imputed to the Minister last year that he was recklessly pulling down without any definite plan of reconstruction; and the halting of the Service at the present time goes to prove that there is no plan, and that the future organisation is to be left to shape itself as time and accident may determine.* So glaring a defect calls for instant remedy.

The condition of the Navy and the Admiralty has been pretty plainly exposed during the last few weeks. It has come to light that Mr Childers, though he evinced considerable zeal in the cause of what he called reform, did in effect reform very little; but that, like all his class, he disturbed without being able to rearrange, and, when his health failed, left the Department in a most unsettled condition, which Mr Goschen has not even attempted to rectify, probably because he is entirely ignorant of the whole subject. A Navy in a high state of efficiency, and ready to deal an immediate blow, is of the first importance now. Yet neither the Navy nor its Administration is in such a state as to satisfy the country at the present time. Surely, to put this arm in order should be one of our very first cares. It should be remembered that not only war, but

successful negotiation, requires that we should be prepared to take the sea at short notice.†

Our misunderstanding, then, with the United States, and our inability to bear ourselves in the quarrel as becomes a great nation, are due to the perversity of Mr Gladstone and his Government. The fond Administration not only felt secure of peace, but it so managed matters that the means of going to war under any circumstances should not be at the disposal of the country. How contemptible now sound the pulings which not long ago impressed great assemblies, large classes of readers, the House of Commons itself! What shall we say to-day about "Happy England"? Who will turn with complacency to the "silver streak of sea"? Were there not more comfort, in this hour of danger, in that old Spanish infantry with which Wellington "could have gone anywhere and done anything;" or in a magnificent fleet animated by such a spirit as Nelson's, and flying the long-neglected signal, "ENGLAND EXPECTS THAT EVERY MAN WILL DO HIS DUTY"?

About a year ago we reminded the country that Governments professing peace at any price and cheap defence are the bloodiest and dearest that a country can be cursed with.‡

* In the middle of February there were four battalions of the Line without lieutenant-colonels, although many weeks had elapsed since the vacancies occurred. It is notorious that the promotions could not be made, because there was no prearranged rule, and because the Commander-in-Chief and the Secretary of State for War disagreed as to the method of filling the appointments.

† It is probable that no mention was made of the Army and Navy in the Queen's Speech, lest the bare naming of them should sound like a menace to the United States; and persons taking this view may flatter themselves that Ministers are nevertheless making active preparations for possible war. But we ask whether this extreme delicacy about the mere mention of arms may not be a mistake, and the advantage to be gained for it quite nugatory in comparison of the risk we run by remaining unprepared? With a man like the late Lord Palmerston at the helm we might safely dispense with words, and trust the Minister for not being taken unawares. But it would be foolhardiness to credit Mr Gladstone with being forearmed notwithstanding that he is forewarned. Again, America could not possibly take umbrage at our putting our defences in order. We have not the least intention of declaring war against her; our provision, if we make it, will be against her possible challenge to us.

‡ See 'Blackwood's Magazine' for Dec. 1870; Article "Thoughts suggested by the War."

We ask any who may have thought our language too strong then, to consider the predicament in which we stand to-day, and the prospect that we may be no longer at peace, and that we may be heavily taxed through the incapacity of a peace-at-any-price and a cheap Government. Even Mr Gladstone in his extremity has been obliged to fall back upon "the traditions and courage of the people of this country," and to talk of not submitting to such claims "at the point of death." We quote this to show the possible future which Mr Gladstone foresees; but in doing so, we ask how he dare appeal to the "traditions and courage of the people of this country"? Who, if not he, has been directing all his efforts to make us forget the glorious deeds of our fathers, to quell the high spirit of the people, and to turn us into a nation of Quakers? If he cannot win but by the strong arm of the country, his system is proved to be a delusion and he an empiric.

Surprising, but not at all convincing, is the announcement made by Ministers in the Queen's Speech concerning Ireland. Mr Gladstone, of course, could prove it to be logically correct, according to some ministerial meaning of the words; but how, to any plain understanding, it can be pretended that crime is decreasing in Ireland, or that the temper of the people has been in the slightest degree improved by recent legislation, it is hard to comprehend. Ministers themselves, in their stump orations about Christmas time, never ventured to claim so much success as they claim in the Queen's Speech. Indeed, the Secretary for Ireland, the official who should know most about the matter, as much as confessed failure, and exhorted the country to patience, after which it should see what it should see. This

we pointed out last month, and we were gratified to see our opinion corroborated by the speeches in Parliament of Lord Derby, Mr Disraeli, and others who challenged the paragraph in the Speech. How can it be contended that crime is decreasing in Ireland, when, since the prorogation of Parliament in the summer, as is notorious, it has been found impossible to do justice on an undoubted murderer because his crime was abetted and applauded by immense numbers of the people of that country? Surely nothing so barefaced and general was ever known before even in Ireland. Before the acquittal and its circumstances could have had place, the spirit which prompts to crime must have been many times more extended and undissembling than ever it was before. Does any man doubt that if another police officer should be zealous, as the unfortunate Talbot was, in the execution of his duty, he would fall by the hand of an assassin, and that that assassin would be sympathised with and shielded? And yet while this conviction must be strong in the minds of all, we are insulted by the announcement that "Ireland has been free from serious crime." The impudence of this goes far beyond the latitude usually tolerated in ministerial and other puffs. There is below them generally a foundation, though perhaps a very unsound one, of truth; but the grain of truth underlying this assertion is hard to discover.

If we cannot admit that there has been in Ireland the least diminution of deeds of violence, as little can we allow that the feeling in that country has become less disaffected or less dangerous than it was before Mr Gladstone began his work of regeneration. There is not the slightest appearance of old sores being healed. Of course it is said

that more time is required for the infallible medicine to take effect; but if this may be pretended concerning the old diseases, how shall we account for an entirely new and very formidable epidemic making its appearance just while all the unsanitary conditions were being so ably cleared away? The "Home Rule" agitation is a growth of the last two years, which sprang up in spite, and very likely in consequence, of Mr Gladstone's boasted legislation. We say "in consequence of;" because when a Government is known to be too weak to put the laws in force, evil feelings are encouraged to show themselves. If Mr Gladstone's rule is so eminently grateful to Ireland, and so curative of old feuds between her and Great Britain, what is the meaning of the "Home Rule" movement? We are wholly unable to account for it on such a hypothesis; but there is another way of viewing matters which makes "Home Rule" very intelligible, and that way we believe to be the true one. We explain "Home Rule" by affirming that Mr Gladstone's policy in regard to Ireland is just about as efficacious as his Foreign policy—that is, that it is utterly futile and mischievous, and calculated to aggravate the very evils which it is intended to cure. There will probably be an Irish debate before long, and then we trust that the unwarrantable licence of this part of the Speech will be fully exposed. Ireland is not free from serious crime. She is in a most dangerous condition, as we shall find if we have a quarrel forced upon us; and she is anything but a subject for Ministers to congratulate themselves or the country upon. Indeed it is a matter for public regret that a misstatement so easy of refutation—

"Gross as a mountain, open, palpable"—

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should have been foisted upon Parliament.

Most men will think that, with so many momentous questions pressing, we might have been spared just now the excitement and interruption to more important business which the Ballot Bill will produce. The introduction of such an apple of discord is particularly ill judged at the present moment, when all parties are endeavouring to sink their differences, and to aid Ministers in extricating the country from the foreign entanglements in which they have involved it. One cannot help thinking that the putting of the two Services into order, and the suppression of disaffection, which may at an unfortunate moment grow to treason in Ireland, would at this conjuncture better occupy the time of Parliament than wrangling over devices to thwart the admitted dishonesty which is possible in secret voting. We are not so well provided for what is before us as to be able calmly to turn aside and address ourselves to a domestic arrangement. It is written of Wellington, that on the eve of the battle of Talavera he sat down and wrote a despatch concerning what?—horse-shoes! It was very well for Wellington to do this; his dispositions for encountering the enemy were all made—what could be done was done. The event was committed to the God of battles, and the General could sit down with a tranquil mind to draw up his memoir on farriers' work. But are our Ministers prepared for the work before them?—have they made their dispositions? are they ready to act in this event or in that? Manifestly they are not; and until they are so they should be required to let horse-shoes alone. If Mr Gladstone deludes himself with the idea that secret voting will at all prolong

his tenure of power, the sooner he dispels it the better. He has marred his work too effectually for it to be of the least consequence how the votes of the people may be taken. We will guarantee him against a majority in the House of Commons, let the voting be by any method that he can devise.

The reopening of the Education question might also, one would think, be conveniently postponed for the present. It is not to be expected that the Conservatives will allow the settlement so recently made to be disturbed because Dissenters have suddenly taken a new resolution regarding it. The attempt to repeal the existing Act may be expected to fail; therefore, to occupy in mere discussion time which may be so profitably devoted to more important purposes is most undesirable.

We have not yet the Estimates published; but it may be assumed beforehand that, appear when they may, they will give rise to strong controversy. Mr Vernon Harcourt, a Liberal member likely to make himself heard, desires that the outlay should be limited to a fixed sum, while the consideration of efficiency beyond what this fixed sum may procure should be altogether discarded. Other Liberal members, we may feel sure, will insist on efficiency being somewhat considered under existing circumstances. The idea that the Ministry is clever enough to combine efficiency with economy is pretty well exploded, and it will be for it to choose which of the two it will give up. By choosing to give up either, it is likely to give umbrage and to lose partisans. We have a misgiving that the essentials of the Army may be made to suffer for the redemption of officers' commissions, and for savings to gratify

Mr Harcourt and those who think with him; and in case this is done, we trust the country will forbid the sacrifice. It were far better to give up the so-called economy; but in that case the Government will have to reckon with those who supported them because they professed to be cheap. Take which course they may, they must be losers to a great extent; and their loss will be just, for they undertook to do what neither they nor any one else can perform.

Of the Megara scandal we have before spoken at length, and we do not wish to go over the subject again. It is set down as one of the shortcomings for which Parliament will this year award a penalty; and we sincerely hope that the penalty may be such a one as will mark clearly the difference in the value of seamen's lives as assessed by the Ministry and by the country. Once more, after going over the numerous offences for which the Gladstone Ministry is to be judged, we stand amazed at the number of accusations to which it has laid itself open in so short a time. Before the people had ceased to wonder at one neglect or indiscretion they were astonished by another, as if it were desired to show them that they were subject to rulers who meant to be a law to themselves, and to recognise no constitutional limit to their power.

We refrained in the early part of this paper from commenting on the "Collier Scandal," knowing that before we could go to press that matter would be dealt with by Parliament. All who desire that the country should thoroughly understand the character and capacity of Mr Gladstone's Government before the latter is driven from office, must rejoice to find that the censure of Parliament

has been virtually pronounced while Ministers have not had an opportunity of escaping from their serious responsibilities. We said last month that they would be arraigned before Parliament. They have been, and will be, so arraigned; but the Collier complaint is only the first among many accusations. Before midsummer, probably, the recklessness and incapacity which are now attracting the attention and eliciting the judgment of Parliament will be patent to the whole country, and then the Ministry may be deposed without any fear of its being again allowed to misguide the vessel of the State.

Among all the points of which this Collier iniquity is composed, that which has most surprised us is the small trickery, to use no stronger term, by which it was sought to violate the spirit of an Act of Parliament while keeping within its letter. Any of the ordinary weaknesses of the Pharisaical Puritan we were quite prepared to see exhibited in Mr Gladstone's acts; but a deed so outrageous as this, done by a person of Mr Gladstone's professed conscientiousness, shows him to be a more dangerous and less estimable person than we apprehended. The loftiness of his aims, and his superiority to all paltry motives, are the grounds upon which we have again and again been called upon by his admirers to cease from distrusting him, and to believe that everything which he undertakes will be carried out with a singleness of purpose which will deserve, if it may not obtain, success. If Mr Gladstone has not distinctly said that he is not as other men are, his whole bearing and public speaking have conveyed the impression that it is because he is so very good and unworldly that the people ought to put their trust in him. We remem-

ber that in Sir Walter Scott's novel of 'Woodstock' there is a saintly character known as Trusty Tomkins, who, on being reproached with an intention to commit some gross immorality, coolly replies that things which would be highly sinful in the unregenerate are venial when done by the elect. We hope that Mr Gladstone has not arrived at the same state of self-complacency as Trusty Tomkins; and yet he would seem to be advancing towards it. One of his colleagues, speaking of him last autumn, as we heard at the time, said that "he would not for all the world have Gladstone's 'conscience.'" To which we rejoin, "Neither would we."

In the debate on this question in the House of Lords, the tone adopted by either side would have itself sufficed to show a stranger to the affair on which hand the right lay. On the Ministerial side the speaking was "wild and tempestuous," evasive of the real question at issue, condemnatory of the motion before the House as a mere party manoeuvre. On the side of the mover (for in this case the Ayes and Noes cannot be called by political names) the facts of the appointment were reviewed, the meaning and intention of the violated Act calmly and thoroughly explained, and the illegality of the Ministerial proceeding made apparent, not by denunciation and iteration, but by patient and skilful proof. The Duke of Argyll's appeal from the expected vote of the House of Lords to the judgment of the Commons, although "mere bluster," as the 'Times' properly called it, is worth repeating, for the sake of the retort which it brought from Lord Cairns:—

"I know," said the Duke, "that the Tory party in this House may, if it chooses to exercise its power, put the members of the Government in a min-

ority ; but if we are censured for this transaction, in which we believe we have acted not only legally but properly, so as not to frustrate the Act of Parliament, we shall appeal to the House of Commons, and also to public opinion, which in this case has been prejudiced by poisoned and unscrupulous statements, but which is never permanently unjust towards public men. (Cheers.)"

On which Lord Cairns observed :—

"In that wild and tempestuous speech we heard to-night, the noble Duke told you that he would appeal from your Lordships' decision, which, he was convinced, would be a mere party vote, to the verdict of the House of Commons—(a laugh)—that pure and serene atmosphere where party considerations are never felt—(cheers, and a laugh)—and where all questions are approached in a calm and judicial spirit, which your Lordships unfortunately cannot imitate."

This was the way to deal with a noble duke talking passionate nonsense. Lord Cairns, having all the argument on his side, could afford to be calm and ironical. But he did better service than this in clearing the case of the complication with which Ministers sought to perplex it, and in considering the Act of Parliament and its violation independently of the fitness or unfitness of Sir Robert Collier for the office to which he has been so improperly promoted. Also, in an appeal to Lord Portman, which we extract, he brought out the fact and the nature of the Ministers' culpability so clearly as to preclude further argument or doubt :—

"The noble Lord who moved the amendment to-night acts in a judicial capacity as Chairman of Quarter-Sessions, and I would ask him, not as a question of party manoeuvre—indeed I never felt less inclined for a party manoeuvre than at this moment—but as a matter of judicial substance, whether he agrees with me in what I am about to say or not. I contend

that the sense and spirit of the Act of Parliament is this—that the Minister who is going to choose a paid member of the Judicial Committee, must make his choice among those who are the judges of the land at the time the choice is made. Does the noble Lord agree to the proposition ?" [The noble and learned Lord paused for an answer, but not receiving one from Lord Portman, proceeded with his remarks amid some laughter.] "I hope the noble Lord will address his mind to this question, for I should be glad to know whether he differs from me with respect to it. I will not condescend to any technicalities as to whether a man may have been a day or a year a judge, but I maintain that the spirit and sense of the Act of Parliament are, that a Minister who chooses a paid member of the Privy Council must make his choice from among those who are judges of the land at the time he makes his choice. (Hear, hear.) I do not forget the letter of the Act, which says, 'at the date of the appointment.' That is sealing-wax and parchment and red tape. I do not want technicalities ; I want substance. The time meant is when the Minister exercises the mental act of making his choice from among those who then are judges of the land. That is a short, simple proposition, and I should like to hear from any noble Lord in what respect he thinks it is wrong." [Lord Portman rose amid some laughter, and made a few observations which were inaudible.] "That is a very safe and discreet answer to give ; but I am sure no member of your Lordships' House will venture to impugn the proposition I have just laid down. I believe it to contain the very pith and marrow of the Act of Parliament on this point. Now, I will ask this further question. I wish to know whether Sir R. Collier was made a member of the Privy Council because he was already a judge, or whether he was made a judge because he had been already chosen by the Prime Minister as a member of the Judicial Committee. (Hear, hear.) . . . I admit that the letter of the statute—what I have called the sealing-wax, the parchment, and the red tape—was complied with ; but if there are such things as substance and spirit and es-

sence, as distinguished from letter—and the Lord Chancellor admits that there are, and that the letter may be regarded while the spirit is violated—and if the person here was to be chosen from the judges, I say that the selection here made was of one who was not a judge at the time of his selection. (Hear, hear.) I have shown you that the promises made were disregarded. I have shown you also why the qualifications of a judge were required. I have given the pith and essence of the statute, and have shown that its spirit has been palpably violated.”

The debate on the same subject which followed in the Lower House was instructive and of great significance. It demonstrated two things—two things that are most precious to us all: first, the clear honest perception of right by which the Commons of England can pierce through subtleties, turn a deaf ear to the charmer's voice, and go straight to a just judgment; second, the respect which still exists for the sovereignty of the law, which will be defended against a Minister and against the Crown.

In face of the plain statements of the country's complaint, as made by Mr Cross and Mr G. Hardy, the refinements of Sir Roundell Palmer, the Lord Advocate, and the Prime Minister, were not simply unconvincing and ineffectual—they were positively painful. It must have been a singularly docile mind that could have followed to Sir R. Palmer's conclusions through his reasonings; for the reasonings made the conclusions absurd. It was his facund tongue, his pleasant, unpretending manner, and his ability to dress up mere nothings like propositions, which obtained for him, from a not very patient House, the attention which he undoubtedly commanded. His first essay was to distinguish between the letter and the spirit in an Act of Parliament, and

this ended in an assertion that the letter *is* the spirit. Nevertheless he went on to lay down rules for ascertaining the spirit from the letter—rules which were scarcely required by the very House which had made the law under discussion. Had it been an old law, made by a past generation, we should have had no other way of getting at its intention but through its words. But the present House of Commons stands towards the Act of 1871 in a relation in which it stands to very few other Acts, and in which no other Parliament can ever stand towards this Act. It was somewhat presumptuous to tell the authors of the Act how to find out from its words their own intention in making it! Unfortunately for the pleader they *knew* very well what they intended. We regret to say, too, that there was perceptible in the debate a consciousness, which some speakers expressed, but which many others allowed to appear by attempting to repudiate it—a consciousness, namely, that not Parliament only as a body, but Ministers as a part of Parliament, knew very well the intention of Parliament when they promoted Sir R. Collier, and gave him his promotion in spite of the law. Mr Denman's admission that, when the Bill of 1871 was passing through the House, he had been asked, and had declined, to move an amendment declaring Attorneys-General to be qualified for Judges of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, is a strong proof, if more proof were needed, that the restriction in the Act has been overridden in the appointment of Sir R. Collier. Sir Roundell's final argument was amusing from the childish illogicality (we hope we have not coined a word) by which he claimed to have made good his proof by arguments wholly

adverse to his case, and all said earnestly and with the appearance of good faith. Any other similar appointment, or this particular appointment if it had been one of many such, would have been in the highest degree censurable; but the actual deed of Ministers, standing alone, was legal and right!

As for Mr Gladstone's defence, all the subtleties and oratorical arts with which he endeavoured to turn attention from the real point at issue, could not disguise the woful weakness of his position. The long-promised explanation did not contain one idea which had not before been presented and discussed. Only once in the course of a speech, which when printed filled three columns of the 'Times,' did he elicit anything like a cheer, and that was when he turned upon one of his revolted followers, Mr Denman. Never, probably, did he exert his powers of persuasion to so little purpose. The House listened with a stony rigidity which once or twice was broken by sounds of impatience as the oft-repeated pleadings were once more paraded without any variety, save the protestations and the deprecations by which the speaker knows so well how to give solemnity to a subject, and the pitiful whine with which he concluded. He said in substance that he had appointed a man not qualified according to the letter of the Act, but who was qualified for the qualification, and therefore (so he condescended to put it) qualified for the final appointment. The Prime Minister of England, speaking to the House of Commons, did not hesitate to claim for himself a dispensing power which, if allowed, would make every restriction and reservation in an Act of Parliament mere waste of words. You restrict the Crown in making certain appointments to a choice

from certain classes, say A and B; I, the Minister, say that C and D, whom your Act excludes, are as good as A and B, and fit to be in A's and B's places; therefore I may make my choice from C and D, and not from A and B. This was the whole argument, but not the whole of the speech. Mr Gladstone appealed to the feeling of the House on two points: first, that this was so small a matter as no House of Commons had ever before thought of censuring a Government for—which was a perplexing assertion, after the emphasis with which he had before affirmed that the imputation on Ministers was not properly termed an error in judgment, or a straining of the law, but that it was in effect nothing less than a CRIME: and secondly, his peroration was an appeal *ad misericordiam* on behalf of Sir R. Collier. The House should consider what would be the effect on him if the vote of censure should be carried. Safely we may conclude that, except in great terror and extremity, when every straw must be caught at, such an appeal would not have been stooped to. If Sir R. Collier's position would be piteous under a vote of censure on Ministers, who, we may ask, had placed him in that position, and persisted in keeping him there, despite the knowledge that the censure was impending? If Ministers had no consideration for Sir Robert Collier, how could they expect it from Parliament? Was Parliament, when vindicating the majesty of the law, to be turned from its purpose because a person for whose behoof the law had been broken would feel keenly the decision of the country? Could Mr Gladstone expect that this argument would sway the House of Commons?

How its own supporters fall away from the Government, affirming that

they could not in conscience support Ministers in this matter; how the Government escaped actual censure by a small majority, but were felt to be virtually censured by the House and the country; these things will be known by means of the daily press before our day of publication. The Minister who could command a majority of near a hundred members a year ago, felt on the morning of the 20th February the bitterness, not only of defeat, but of coming disgrace.

Incidentally, in the discussion on Sir R. Collier's translation, the appointment of the Rev. Mr Harvey to Ewelme Rectory was noticed. This appears to be a case very similar to that with which Parliament was occupied at the time of its being mentioned. The Minister's choice has been made beyond the bounds prescribed by law, and it has been sought to cure the want of a real, by substituting a colourable, qualification. It is an instance full of danger to the country—a small act in itself, perhaps, but, coupled with other acts, forming part of a series which warns us to look to our rights and safety. No doubt the public mind, while intent upon the more recent illegalities, has been carried back to, and impressed by, that much bolder act of prerogative by which, in the summer, the functions of one branch of the Legislature were overridden. That seemed a most successful inroad upon the Constitution at the time; and the House of Commons, which can judge so shrewdly now that the consequences are cropping out, did not trouble itself then to make the same stand that it made a week ago. Nevertheless the present plight of Ministers is a consequence of which that ill-advised act was one cause. The error is bearing fruit now. It is clear that a majority of the House

of Commons cannot for long be relied on to uphold a Minister in doing great wrong; and that when the day of reckoning comes the old faults and the new will be expiated together.

Mr Denman, a Queen's Counsel, and a firm political adherent of Mr Gladstone, used these words in concluding his speech on Sir Robert Collier's translation:—

"He could not help thinking it was an indication of a state of mind . . . in the dark as to what were the requirements of the country which had caused the Lord Chancellor to use the Court of Common Pleas in such a way as, in the opinion of the Chief Justice of that court, to degrade it, by turning it to a purpose which was derogatory to its position as one of the great superior courts of the country. If this conduct were passed over without censure, or what the Government should consider as a censure, there would be the greatest possible danger of similar acts being done again. (Hear, hear.) He hoped what had occurred, whatever might be the result of the debate, would prevent the repetition of such an act on any future occasion. He trusted the Government would feel that there was a real, honest conviction in the country, in the press, and elsewhere, that our courts ought to be kept sacred from attempts such as this to tamper with them (cheers); that our Acts of Parliament ought to be kept sacred, and be construed according to their spirit, not their letter. (Cheers.) If such should be the result of this discussion, he should be fully satisfied; but, feeling as he did about this transaction, he could not, with any respect for himself, refrain from voting for the motion of his friend. (Cheers.)"

Mr Hardy, too, though without any bitterness, made some remarks which show that the belief in Mr Gladstone's political conscientiousness is not what it was.

"When I recollect," said the hon. member, "certain things which have been done, especially by the Prime Minister, in respect to Acts of Parlia-

ment, I am not so confident of his intentions and views with reference to Acts of Parliament. (Hear.) I do not impute improper motives; but we have seen that the words 'A Master of Arts of Oxford University' have been interpreted to mean, 'A Master of Arts of Cambridge University.' (Hear, hear.) Again, Parliament decided that there should be three Commissioners under the Irish Act, but when one of the Commissioners died, no other was appointed in his place. (Mr Gladstone here made some remark.) At all events, there has been a vacancy for some time, and no notice has been taken of the circumstance. In another case the Home Secretary dispensed with the Factory Act for a certain purpose."

Let us hope that the teachings of the last fortnight may not be wholly thrown away upon Mr Gladstone, notwithstanding that he has shown no sign of repentance yet. Whatever may be his opinion concerning Acts of Parliament which stand in the way of his will, he must probably understand by this time that we hold them to be sacred, and will not suffer them to be paltered with. After these escapades, Parliament will watch him more closely than ever, and, if he take not heed to his ways, will make him feel the weight of its displeasure.

Turning from these dissensions to the Army Estimates, which have been laid before Parliament, but of which we shall know only the general totals before we go to press, we find one of our fears realised in the insufficiency of the provisions. Notwithstanding the charge for the redemption of officers' commissions, the Estimates are lower by £1,027,200* than those of last year. This means that the men and *matériel* have been reduced in order that commissions may be paid for and a saving nevertheless exhibited. The

Regular Forces have been reduced by 1398 men. The first Army Reserve has been increased by 1000 men; but then the second Reserve has been decreased by 5000 men; so that on the two Reserves there is a loss of 4000 men. The charge for Control Establishments and Services is reduced by £746,600, and the charge for works and buildings by £128,800. The Army proper is therefore again diminished, but the 'Times' comforts us for this by pointing to an increase of Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers! In transport, supply, and buildings, the Army is to suffer; but again we have the assurance of the 'Times' that the liberal expenditure of the last two years makes the present saving reasonable and proper. We know not who instructs the 'Times;' but this we know, that military men will affirm that the complaint is general that the provisions made by the Government last year were far below the requirements of the Service; that the Control Department is not half organised; neither, as a rule, has it in any district command of the reserve of stores which has been laid down as the proper quantity; that the magazines and store-buildings are altogether insufficient for the stores that we ought to have; that the total barrack accommodation of the whole kingdom is insufficient to give adequate space and shelter to the troops actually under arms; and that the character of the accommodation in very many of the barracks is inconsistent with the scale according to which, under many a Commission's approved report, and many a Royal Warrant, the country has undertaken that officers and soldiers shall be provided. Last year, or we err, the barrack accommodation was

* We obtained our information from the 'Times.'

too little by about 10,000 men's cover; and yet we are in a position to cut down the estimates for buildings! It is not the barracks only, but the defences also, which are not to be provided for this year as last. There is to be a saving of £20,000 on fortifications and Control buildings. Commissions are thus to be paid for out of the very muscle and marrow of the Service; and this is proposed at a time when the country possibly lies open to the dangers to which we have already adverted, but which we will not again press into notice. Is this the way in which panics are to be made impossible for the future? * Assuredly Ministers ought to be quietly but certainly setting our house in order, instead of angling for Radical votes by weakening our defences. Further back we wondered whether efficiency or economy would be preferred; we see now that economy has carried the day. But there is yet the action of Parliament to be taken, and our hope is that not only the provisions of the Estimates, but the state of troops, arms, *matériel*, stores, barracks, and works, will be thoroughly scanned by Parliament, and some plain knowledge arrived at as to our fitness or unfitness to take our own part if ill-fortune and weak policy should make it necessary for us to do so.†

It would be wrong, while we are discussing proceedings in Parlia-

ment, not to take notice of the remark made by Mr Miall in reference to the Burials Bill. That honourable member professed himself indifferent to the measure referred to, except so far as it is part of a larger scheme, the larger scheme being no doubt the disestablishment of the Church of England. This is a warning which churchmen should not neglect. The Nonconformists will make trial of strength on the Education question, and if they are powerful enough to reverse the lately-made law on that subject, no doubt they will attack the Church. It should be the care of all who respect the Church to give them a rebuff on the Education question such as may discourage them for the present from making the attack. And the position which they have taken up makes it important that Mr Gladstone's influence should be effectually and permanently weakened. The Dissenters have for the present taken up a position hostile to the Government. It will naturally be the desire of Mr Gladstone to win them back, to gain which end it is to be feared that he might be tempted to sacrifice the Church or anything else which he might have power to make away with. We must only hope, as we fairly may, that the action of Parliament, and the alienation of the country from the Ministry, will be so marked this Session as to prevent the leaving of

* Although we have said it more than once, we take leave to say again, that it is possible for a Government seriously to impair our military efficiency and yet to keep the evil concealed for a time. Soldiers and sailors do not make a practice of publishing to the world what they know concerning deficiencies and neglects, and the general public cannot perceive defects which lie below the surface. It is therefore of the greatest importance that the Army and Navy Estimates should be this year examined and criticised by competent persons independent of the Ministry, lest the country in some day of danger should be made heart-sick by the discovery that the little that has been done is superficial, and that the Services are paralysed for want of accessories.

† About to go to press, we hear that Lord Northbrook is to succeed the much-lamented Lord Mayo as Governor-General of India. In this case the War Office will lose the Under-Secretary, who has been reputed to have the best head, and to be the only person gifted with the power of *deciding*, within its walls.

any of our institutions longer at Mr Gladstone's disposal.

As we have always predicted the failure of Mr Gladstone's popularity which has now occurred, it may interest some of our readers to learn the grounds on which we founded our anticipation. One principal foundation for our opinion was this, that we perceived the almost childish reliance with which Mr Gladstone leaned on one branch of the Legislature alone, indifferent to, or even defiant of, the other. From the first it was evident that he regarded the House of Lords as a body to be coerced and bullied rather than to be propitiated—as a target in which he might plant shafts so as to gain applause from his followers, but never as a power whose disposition could at any time be of importance to his fortunes. Such a regard of such an institution was not only unpatriotic, but it argued the greatest want of discernment and prevision. Now they who can make the least use of history must know that institutions which have become rooted in a nation, and are the growth of centuries, are not subjects for a popular Minister to take his pleasure on. They do not continually exhibit feats of strength, neither can they at all times successfully resist the outbursts of ephemeral passion, but they have a latent vitality which in the long-run will wear out assailants and generations of assailants. The rebound of the oak crushed the strong man in the moment of his fancied triumph. We always considered Mr Gladstone's treatment of the House of Lords as indiscreet in the highest degree. He seemed never to remember its origin or history, or its intimate connection with our nationality; but he seemed to see in it only a body whose majority disapproved of his policy and acts, and which, for that reason alone, was to

be the object of his petulance and scorn. It was clear to us that although the Peers might not care, might not indeed be able, to vanquish Mr Gladstone in the first flush of his success, yet that the day must come to him, as it has come to others, when he would dash his foot against a stone, and that in such a case the just resentment of the Lords would be of terrible import against him. A statesman who commences business showing so plainly that he relies on popularity alone, cannot in our opinion enjoy a long or a prosperous tenure of office. It was not, however, only in the recklessness with which he commenced work that we saw sign of failure; in the very association by which he made himself momentarily strong the same was to be seen. A Quaker Government for a country like this, with all its instincts, persuasions, and traditions! The doctrines of peace at any price, withdrawal from the disputes which may agitate other nations, reference of all our own disputes to arbitration, though they amuse the people in quiet times, can never be adopted as his guides in practice by any one deserving the name of an English statesman. The regulation of foreign affairs by such a method cannot satisfy a shrewd and spirited people, but must produce complications and heartburnings which will speedily bring the method into disrepute. Furthermore, cheap Governments must always enter upon their duties shackled. It is possible for a time, by simply neglecting to make the necessary provision for the public service, to make a show of considerable saving; but a day of retribution always follows the ill-judged parsimony. Defects in the departments cannot be kept long concealed, and once they come to light the people have little thanks to give to the Ministers

who failed to prevent them. It was certain, too, that the Army and Navy, though overborne for a time by the power of a reckless Minister, would sooner or later make their voices heard, and rise up in judgment against a suicidal policy. Foreign complications would arise, and then the inquiry from all sides would be, not how much money has been saved, but what means have we of confronting our enemies? In all these matters Mr Gladstone appeared to commit the great mistake of taking the cries which are continually being raised, partly by discontented persons and partly by persons whose business it is to make others discontented, as his guide in legislation. It is rarely that such cries indicate the real wants of the country, or that it is safe to comply fully with what they demand. The first concession to them shows a Government to have no firm policy of its own, and leads to a series of demands increasing in rapid progression. It is impossible to comply with all these; and not to comply gives offence, and alienates voters and constituencies. Besides, the time must come when the body of the nation will find out the folly of governing according to clamour, and will interpose between the Ministry and the noisy parties. What above all assured us of Mr Gladstone's failure was the composition of the majority which he headed. It was made up of sections all anxious for some disturbance of existing methods and institutions, but holding opinions and entertaining hopes incompatible one with another. For a while it might be united in some general attempt; but dissensions were sure to show themselves, and these, on appearing, would be the more violent and bitter, and excite the greater dissatisfaction with the Government, for

the known proclivity of the latter to give way to clamour and pressure. When the sections rival each other in making a noise, the cohesion of the party under the guidance of leaders is gone. We confess that we did not expect Mr Gladstone to be guilty of attempting to override the Legislature by the exercise of prerogative, neither did we think he would be so mad as to set the Acts of the existing Parliament at defiance. He has not come short of, but he has gone beyond, the errors which we looked for, and so he has hastened his fall. It will be observed that the question now before us all is, not as to the expediency or in expediency of favouring some particular measure advocated by Ministers, but whether Ministers, and especially the Prime Minister, are fit to govern at all. It is not a particular policy, but Mr Gladstone's reputation as a statesman, which is in imminent danger. He has appeared to us as one who travelled along from end to end of the axis of an ellipse, the breadth of the figure indicating at each stage his success. Starting at one end when he first attracted notice, at every wheel or quarrel he passed on to a wider and wider attainment. Now it would seem that the longest transverse line has been passed. The alliance with Mr Bright, in which he last placed himself, gave him his widest popularity. When he shall advance beyond that, as he will do if he quarrels with the Liberal party, his field will contract as it before expanded, and he may find himself getting into narrower and narrower limits, only that they will be at the revolutionary, instead of the conservative, end of the figure. Beales, Finlen, Bradlaugh, have already had some little friendly passages with Mr Gladstone, which hereafter may ripen into al-

liances, each of which may have its day. We look forward with some anxiety to the dissolution of his Government; but that anxiety is tempered by the reflection that, join himself to what section he may, he can never again be so dangerous as he was at the beginning of 1869. The 'Examiner' newspaper did not refrain from saying, as we showed last month, that in a former age the political sins of Mr Gladstone's Government would have been explained by supra-mundane, if not by diabolical, agency. We certainly would not have originated that remark; but, the idea being suggested to us, we see in Mr Gladstone's career one of those cases from the like of which imaginative minds in former days may have invented stories of unmentionable compacts. By breaking with all his former associates, by flinging away all the convictions in which he had been brought up, and to which he had been foremost in giving voice, he

contrived to acquire great power: he kept it for a season: it began to wane, and he resorted to all manner of shifts to retain it, every temporary expedient but making his ultimate downfall more certain and more hopeless. Now, it would seem, the end is near, when, having sacrificed consistency, and led the attack on all that he had formerly revered and upheld, and destroyed some things, after mismanaging every department of the State, and bringing the country into confusion, he is hawked at, and stricken down, not by his earliest associates on whom he turned in the day of his prosperity, but by the very factions for whose favour he sacrificed all, and by whose help he thrived for a season. To complete the resemblance of his case to the old legends it is only necessary that all who hear of his fall should say that he has his just reward. And in this point the likeness promises to hold good.

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CHAPTER XLVIII.—A BREATHLESS DISINTERMENT.

By this time we were up to all the ins and outs of everything. A sailor has such a knowledge of knots, and the clever art of splicing, that you cannot play loose tricks, in trying on a yarn with him. Jerry Toms and I were ready, long before that day was out, to tie up our minds in a bow-line knot, and never more undo them. Jerry went even beyond my views, as was sure to be, because he knew so much less of the matter; he would have it that Parson Chowne had choked the two children without any aid, and then in hatred and mockery of the noble British uniform, had buried them deep in Braunton Burrows, wearing a cocked for a shovel hat, purely by way of outrage.

On the other hand, while I agreed with Jerry up to a certain distance, I knew more of Parson Chowne (whom he never had set eyes upon) than to listen to such rubbish. And while we agreed in the main so truly, and thoroughly praised each other's wisdom, all the people in the

house made so highly much of us, that Jerry forgot the true line of reasoning, even before nine o'clock at night, and dissented from my conclusions so widely, and with so much arrogance, that it did not grieve me (after he got up) to have knocked him down like a ninepin.

However, in the morning he was all right, and being informed upon every side that the cook did it with the rolling-pin, he acknowledged the justice of it, having paid more attention to her than a married lady might approve, though parted from her husband. However, she forgave him nobly, and he did the same to her; and I, with all my knowledge of women, made avowal in the presence of the lady-housekeeper, that my only uneasiness was to be certain whether I ought to admire the more the behaviour on her part or on his. And the cook had no certainty in the morning, exactly what she might have done.

This little matter made a stir far beyond its value; and having some

knowledge of British nature, I proposed to the comitatus, with deference both to the cook and housekeeper, also a glance at the first housemaid, that we should right all misunderstanding by dining together comfortably, an hour before the usual time. Because, as I clearly expressed it, yet most inoffensively, our breakfast had been ruined by a piece, I might say, of misconstruction overnight between two admirable persons. And Heaviside came in just then, and put the cap on all of it, by saying that true sailors were the greatest of all sportsmen; therefore, in honour of our arrival, he had asked, and got leave from the gamekeepers, to give a great rabbiting that afternoon down on Branton Burrows; and he hoped that Mistress Cockhanterbury, being the lady-housekeeper, would grace the scene with her presence, and let every maid come to the utmost.

Heaviside's speech, though nothing in itself, neither displaying any manner at all, was received with the hottest applause; and for some time Jerry and I had to look at one another, without any woman to notice us. We made allowance for this, of course, although we did not like it. For, after all, who was Heaviside? But we felt so sorely the ill effects of the absence of perfect harmony upon the preceding evening (when all our male members of the human race took more or less the marks of knuckles), that a sense of stiffness helped us to make no objection to anything. And tenfold thus, when we saw how the maids had made up their minds for frolicking. These young things must have their way, as well as the nobler lot of us: for they really have not so very much less of mind than higher women have; and they feel what a woman is too well to push themselves so forward. They know their place, and

they like their place, and they tempt us down into it.

Be that either way—and now unwomanly women waste their good brains upon a trifle of this kind—rabbiting was to be our sport; and no sooner was the dinner done, and ten minutes given to the maids to dress, than every dog on the premises worth his salt was whistled for. It would have amused you to see the maids, or I might say all the womankind, coming out with their best things on, and their hair done up, and all pretending never even to have seen a looking-glass.

Madame Heaviside (as she commanded all people to entitle her) was of the whole the very grandest as regards appearance. Also in manner and carrying on; but of this I have no time to speak. Enough that the former Naval Instructor thought it wiser to keep his own place, and let her flirt with the gamekeepers. We had dogs, and ferrets, and nets, and spades, and guns for those who were clever enough to keep from letting them off at all, and to frighten the women without any harm. There must have been five-and-twenty of us in number altogether, besides at least a score of children who ran down from Branton village, when they saw what we were at. There was no restraint laid upon us by any presence of the gentry; for Sir Philip was not in the humour for sport, and the Squire of course kept himself to his room; and as for the Captain, we had no token of his return from South Devon yet.

Therefore we had the most wonderful fun, enjoying the wildness of the place, and the freshness of the river air, and wilfulness of the sand-hills, also the hide-and-seek of the rushes, and the many ups and downs and pleasure of helping the young women in and out, also how these latter got (if they had any limbs

they were proud of) into rabbit-holes on purpose to be lifted out of them, and fill the rosettes of their shoes, and have them dusted by a naval man's very best pocket-handkerchief—together with a difficulty of standing on one foot while doing it, or having it done to them, and a fear of breathing too much out—after onion-sauce at dinner-time—which made their figures look beautiful. Enough that I took my choice among them, for consideration; and jotted down the names of three, who must have some cash from their petticoats. Let nobody for a moment dream that I started with this intention. The rest of my life was to be devoted to the Royal Navy, if only a hot war should come again; of which we already felt simmering. But I could not regard all these things, after so many years at sea, without some desire for further acquaintance with the meaning of everything. At sea we forget a great deal of their ways. When we come ashore—there they are again!

This is a very childish thing for a man like me to think of. Nevertheless I do fall back from perfect propriety sometimes; never as regards money; but when my feelings are touched by the way in which superior young women try to catch me; or when my opinion is asked conscientiously as to cordials. And this same afternoon the noble clearness of the sun and air, and the sound of merry voices glancing where all the world (unless it were soft sand) would have echoed them, and the sense of going sporting—which is half the game of it—these and other things, as well as the fatness of the rabbits' backs, and great skill not to bruise them, led the whole of us, more or less, into contemplation of Nature's beauties. We must have killed more than a hundred and fifty coney, in one

way and another, when Heaviside came up, almost at a run, to a hill where Jerry Toms and I were sitting down, to look about a bit, and to let the young women admire us.

"What's the matter?" said I, not liking to be interrupted thus.

"Matter enough," he panted out; "where is Madame? The Lord keep her away."

"Madame is gone down to the cave in the sand," said Jerry, though I frowned at him, "together with that handsome fellow—I forget his name—underkeeper they call him."

"Hurrah, my hearties!" cried Heaviside; "that is luck, and no mistake. Now lend a hand, every lubber of you. Her pet dog Snap is in the sand; 'with the devil to pay, and no pitch hot,' if we take long to get him out again."

We knew what he meant; for several dogs of an over-zealous character had been smothered in and buried in the rabbit-galleries, through the stupidity of people who crowded upon the cone over them. Some had been dug out alive, and some dead, according to what their luck was. And now we were bound to dig out poor Snap, and woe to us all if we found him dead!

I took the biggest spade, as well as the entire command of all of them, and we started at quick step for the place which Heaviside pointed out to us. He told us, so far as his breath allowed, that his small brown terrier Snap had found a rabbit of tender age hiding in a tuft of rushes. Snap put all speed on at once, but young bunny had the heels of him, and flipped up her tail at the mouth of a hole, with an air of defiance which provoked Snap beyond all discretion. He scarcely stopped to think before he plunged with a yelp into the hole, while another and a wiser dog came up, and shook his ears at it. For a

little while they heard poor Snap working away in great ecstasy, scratching at narrow turns, and yelping when he almost got hold of fur. Heavyside stood, in his heavy way, whistling into the entrance-hole, which went down from a steep ascent with a tuft of rushes over it. But Snap was a great deal too game-some a dog to come back—even if he heard him. Meanwhile a lot of bulky fellows, who could do no more than clap their hands, got on the brow of the burrow and stamped, and shouted to Snap to dig deeper. Then of a sudden the whole hill alided, as a hollow fire does, and cast a great part of itself into a deep gully on the north of it. And those great louts who had sent it down so, found it very hard (and never deserved) to get their legs out.

No wonder that Heavyside had made such a run to come and fetch us. For Snap must be now many feet underground, and the Naval Instructor knew what it would be to go home to Nanette without him. He stood above the slip and listened, and there was no bark of Snap; while to my mind came back strangely thoughts of the five poor sons of Sker, and of the little one dwelling in sand, forlorn and abandoned Bardie.

"Dig away, my lads, dig away!" I cried, from force of memory, and setting example to every one; "I have seen a thing like this before; it only wants quick digging." We dug and dug, and drove our pit through several decks of rabbit-berths; and still I cried "Dig on, my lads!" although they said it was hopeless. Then suddenly some one struck something hard, and cried "Halloa!" and frightened us. We crowded round, and I took the lead, and made the rest keep back from me, in right of superior discipline. And thence I heaved out a beautiful cocked-hat of a British

Captain of the Royal Navy, with Snap inside of it, and not quite dead!

Such a cheer and sound arose (the moment that Snap gave a little sniff), from universal excitement and joy, with Heavyside at the head of it, that I feared to be hoisted quite out of the hole, and mounted on human shoulders. This I like well enough now and then, having many a time deserved without altogether ensuing it; but I could not stop to think of any private triumph now. The whole of my heart was hot inside me, through what I was thinking of.

That poor honest fellow, who so eschewed the adornment of the outward man, and carried out pure Christianity so as to take no heed of what he wore, or whether he wore anything whatever; yet who really felt for people of a weaker cultivation, to such an extreme that he hardly ever went about by day much,—this noble man had given evidence such as no man, who had lost respect by keeping a tailor, could doubt of. In itself, it was perspicuous; and so was the witness, before he put up with a sack, in order to tender it.

The whole force of this broke upon me now; while the others were showing the hat round, or blowing into the little dog's nostrils, and with a rabbit's tail tickling him; because in a single glance I had seen that the hat was our Captain Bampfylde's. And then I thought of old Sir Philip, striding sadly along these burrows, for ever seeking something. "Dig away, dig away, my lads. Never mind the little dog. Let the maidens see to him. Under our feet there is something now, worth a hundred thousand dogs." All the people stood and stared, and thought that I was off my wits; and but for my uniform, not one would ever have stopped to hearken

me. It was useless to speak to Heaviside. The whole of his mind was exhausted by anxiety as to his wife's little dog. No sleep could he see before him for at least three lunar months, unless little Snap came round again. So I had to rely on myself alone, and Jerry Toms, and two gamekeepers.

All these were for giving up; because I can tell you it is no joke to throw out spadeful after spadeful of this heavy deceitful sand, with half of it coming back into the hole; and the place where you stand not steadfast. And the rushes were combing darkly over us, showing their ginger-coloured roots, and with tufts of jagged eyebrows threatening overwhelmment. For our lives we worked away—with me (as seems to be my fate) compelled to be the master—and all the people looking down, and ready to revile us, if we could not find a stirring thing. But we did find a stirring thing, exactly as I will tell you.

For suddenly my spade struck something soft, and which returned no sound, and yet was fine enough to stop, or at any rate to clog the tool. Although it was scarcely twilight yet, and many people stood around us, a feeling not of fear so much as horror seized upon me. Because this was not like the case of digging out poor bodies smothered by accident or the will of God, but was something far more dreadful; proof, to wit, of atrocious murder done by villany of mankind upon two little helpless babes. So that I scarce could hold the spade, when a piece of white linen appeared through the sand, and then some tresses of long fair hair, and then two little hands crossed on the breast, and a set of small toes sticking upward. And close at hand lay another young body, of about the same size, or a trifle larger.

At this terrible sight, the deepest

breath of awe drew through all of us, and several of the women upon the hill shrieked and dropped, and the children fled, and the men feared to come any nearer. Even my three or four fellow-diggers leaped from the hole with alacrity, leaving me all by myself to go on with this piteous disinterment. For a moment I trembled too much to do so, and leaned on my spade in the dusky grave, watching the poor little things, and loath to break with sacrilegious hands such innocent and eternal rest. "Ye pure and stainless souls," I cried, "hovering even now above us, in your guardian angel's arms, and appealing for judgment on your icy-hearted murderer, pardon me for thus invading, in the sacred cause of justice, the calm sleep of your tenements."

In this sad and solemn moment, with all the best spectators moved to tears by my deep eloquence, as well as their own rich sympathies, it struck me that the legs of one of the corpses stuck up rather strangely. I had not been taken aback, at all, by the bright preservation of hands and toes, because I knew well what the power of sand is when the air is kept far away; but it was dead against all my experience, that even a baby, eight years buried, should have that muscular power of leg. Without any further hesitation, up I caught the nearest of them, being desperate now to know what would be the end of it.

Three or four women, whose age had passed from lying in to laying out, now ran down the hill in great zealousness; but though their profession is perhaps the most useful of all as yet invented by human nature, there was no exercise for it now. For behold, in the evening light, and on the brink of the grave, were laid two very handsome and large Dutch dolls, clad in their night-gowns, and looking as fresh as when they left

the doll-maker's shop. The sand remained in their hair of course, and in their linen, but fell away (by reason of its dryness) from their faces, and hands, and feet, the whole of which were of fine hard wax. But the joints of their arms and legs had stiffened, from having no children to work them, also their noses had been spoiled at some stage of their exsequies; and upon the whole it seemed hard to say whether their appearance was more ludicrous or deplorable.

However, that matter was settled for them by the universal guffaw of the fellows who had been scared of their scanty wits not more than two minutes since, and many of whom were as brave as could be now to make laughter at my expense. This is a thing which I never allow, but very soon put a stop to it. And so I did now, without any hard words, but turning their thoughts discreetly.

"Come, my lads," I said, "we have done a better turn to the gentleman who feeds us than if we had found two thousand babies, such as you ran away from. Rally round me, if you have a spark of courage in your loutish bodies. You little know how much hangs on this; while in your clumsy witless way, you are making a stupid joke of it. Mr Heavyside, I pray you, seek for me Mistress Cockhanterbury; while I knock down any rogue who shows the impudence to come near me."

Every man pulled his proud stomach in, when I spoke of the lady-housekeeper, who was a Tartar, high up on a shelf, allowing no margin for argument. She appeared in the distance, as managing-women always do when called upon; and she saw the good sense of what little I said, and she laid them all under my orders.

CHAPTER XLIX.—ONE WHO HAS INTERRED HIMSELF.

Such an effect was now produced all over all around us, that every man pressed for his neighbour's opinion, rather than offer his own, almost. This is a state of the public mind that cannot be long put up with; for half the pleasure goes out of life when a man is afraid of argument. But inasmuch as I was always ready for all comers, and would not for a moment hearken any other opinion, the great bulk of conclusion ran into the mould I laid for it.

This was neither more nor less than that Satan's own chaplain, Chowne, was at the helm of the whole of it. Some people said that I formed this opinion through an unchristian recollection of his former rudeness to me; I mean when he blew me out of bed, and tried to drown, and to burn me alive. However, the great majority saw that my nature was

not of this sort, but rather inclined to reflect with pleasure upon any spirited conduct. And to tell the whole truth, upon looking back at the Parson, I admired him more than any other man I had seen, except Captain Nelson. For it is so rare to meet with a man who knows his own mind thoroughly, that if you find him add thereto a knowledge of his neighbours' minds, certain you may be that here is one entitled to lead the nation. He may be almost too great to care about putting this power in exercise, unless any grand occasion betides him; just as Parson Chowne refused to go into the bishopric; and just as Nelson was vexed at being the supervisor of smugglers. Nevertheless these men are ready, when God sees fit to appoint them.

However, to come back to these

dolls, and the opening now before them. The public (although at first disappointed not to have found two real babies strangled in an experienced manner) perceived the expediency of rejoicing in the absence of any such horror. Only there were many people, of the lower order, so disgusted at this cheat, and strain upon their glands of weeping, with no blood to show for it, that they declared their firm resolve to have nothing more to do with it. For my part, being some little aware of the way in which laurels are stolen, I kept my spade well up, and the two dolls in my arms, with their heads down, and even their feet grudged to the view of the gossipers. In the midst of an excited mob, a calm sight of the proper thing to do may lead them anywhere. And I saw that the only proper thing was to leave everything to me. They (with that sense of fairness which exists in slow minds more than in quick ones) fell behind me, because all knew that the entire discovery was my own. Of course without Snap I could never have done it; nor yet without further accidents: still there it was; and no man even of our diffident Welsh nation, can in any fairness be expected to obscure himself.

My tendency, throughout this story, always has been to do this. But I really did begin to feel the need of abjuring this national fault, since men of a mixture of any sort, without even Celtic blood in them, over and over again had tried to make a mere nobody of me.

Hence it was, and not from any desire to advance myself, that among the inferior race, I stood upon my rights, and stuck to them. If ever there had been any drop of desire for money left in me, after perpetual purification (from seven years of getting only coppers, and finding

most of them forgeries), this scene was alone sufficient to make me glad of an empty purse. For any man who has any money must long to put more to it; as the children pile their farthings, hoping how high they may go. I like to see both old and young full of schemes so noble; only they must let an ancient fellow like me keep out of them.

These superior senses glowed within me, and would not be set aside by any other rogue preceding me, when I knocked at Sir Philip's door, and claimed first right of audience. The other fellows were all put away by the serving-men, as behoved them; then I carried in everything, just as it was, and presented the whole with great deference.

Sir Philip had inkling of something important, and was beginning to shake now and then; nevertheless he acknowledged my entrance with his wonted dignity; signed to the footman to refresh the sperm-oil lamps in the long dark room; and then to me to come and spread my burden on a table. Nothing could more clearly show the self-command which a good man wins by wrestling long with adversity. For rumour had reached him that I had dug up his son's cocked-hat, and his two grandchildren, all as fresh as the day itself. It is not for me (who have never been so deeply stirred in the grain of the heart by heaven's visitations) to go through and make a show of this most noble and ancient gentleman's doings, or feelings, or language even. A man of low station, like myself, would be loath to have this done to him, at many and many a time of his life; so (if I could even do it in the case of a man so far above me, and so far more deeply harrowed) instead of being proud of describing, I must only despise myself.

Enough to say that this snowy-haired, most simple yet stately gentleman, mixed the usual mixture of the things that weep and the things that laugh; which are the joint-stock of our nature, from the old Adam and the young one. What I mean—if I keep to facts—is that he knelt on a strip of canvas laid at the end of the table, and after some trouble to place his elbows (because of the grit of the sandiness), bowed his white forehead and silvery hair, and the calm majesty of his face, over those two dollies, and over his son's very best cocked-hat, and in silence wept thanksgiving to the great Father of everything.

"David Llewellyn," he said, as he rose and approached me as if I were quite his equal; "allow me to take your hand, my friend. There are few men to whom I would sooner owe this great debt of gratitude than yourself, because you have sailed with my son so long. To you and your patience and sagacity, under the mercy of God, I owe the proof, or at any rate these tokens of my poor son's innocence. I—I thank the Lord and you——"

Here the General for the moment could not say another word.

"It is true, your Worship," I answered, "that none of your own people showed the sense or the courage to go on. But it is a Welshman's honest pride to surpass all other races in valour and ability. I am no more than the very humblest of my ancestors may have been."

"Then all of them must have been very fine fellows," Sir Philip replied, with a twinkling glance. "But now I will beg of you one more favour. Carry all these things, just as they are, to the room of my son, Mr Philip Bampfylde."

At first I was so taken aback that I could only gaze at him. And then I began to think, and to see the reason of his asking it.

"I have asked you to do a strange thing, good David; if it is an unpleasant one, say so in your blunt sailor's fashion."

"Your Honour," I answered, with all the delicacy of my nature upwards; "say not another word. I will do it."

For truly to speak it, if anything had been often a grief and a care to me, it was the bitterness of thinking of that Squire Philip deeply, and not knowing anything. The General bowed to me with a kindness none could take advantage of, and signalled me to collect my burden. Then he appointed me how to go, together with a very old and long-accustomed servant. Himself would not come near his son, for fear of triumph over him.

After a long bit of tapping, and whispering, and the mystery servants always love to make of the simplest orders, I was shown with my arms well aching (for those wooden dolls were no joke, and the Captain's hat weighed a stone at least, with all the sand in the lining) into a dark room softly strewn, and hung with ancient damask. The light of the evening was shut out, and the failure of the candles made it seem a cloudy starlight. Only in the furthest corner there was light enough to see by; and there sate, at a very old desk, a white-haired man with his hat on.

If I can say one thing truly (while I am striving at every line to tell the downright honesty), this truth is that my bones and fibres now grew cold inside of me. There was about this man, so placed, and with the dimness round him, such an air of difference from whatever we can reason with, and of far withdrawal from the ways of human nature, as must send a dismal shudder through a genial soul like mine. There he

sate, and there he spent three parts of his time with his hat on, gazing at some old grey tokens of a happy period, but (so far as could be judged) hoping, fearing, doing, thinking, even dreaming—nothing! He would not allow any clock or watch, or other record of time in the chamber, he would not read or be read to, neither write or receive a letter. There he sate, with one hand on his forehead pushing back the old dusty hat, with his white hair straggling under it and even below the gaunt shoulder-blades, his face set a little on one side, without any kind of meaning in it, unless it were long weariness, and patient waiting God's time of death. I was told that once a-day, whenever the sun was going down over the bar, in winter or summer, in wet or dry, this unfortunate man arose, as if he knew the time by instinct without view of heaven, and drew the velvet curtain back and flung the shutter open, and for a moment stood and gazed with sorrow-worn yet tearless eyes upon the solemn hills and woods, and down the gliding of the river, following the pensive footfall of another receding day. Then with a deep sigh he retired from all chance of starlight, darkening body, mind, and soul, until another sunset.

Upon the better side of my heart, I could feel true pity for a man overwhelmed like this by fortune; while my strength of mind was vexed to see him carry on so. Therefore straight I marched up to him, when I began to recover myself, having found no better way of getting through perplexity.

As my footsteps sounded heavily in the gloomy chamber, Squire Philip turned, and gazed at first with cold displeasure, and then with strong amazement at me. I waited for him to begin, but he could not, whether from surprise or

loss of readiness through long immurement.

"May it please your Honour," I said; "the General has sent me hither to clear my Captain from the charge of burying your Honour's children."

"What—what do you mean?" was all that he could stammer forth, while his glassy eyes were roving from my face to the dolls I bore, and round the room, and then back again.

"Exactly as I say, your Honour. These are what the wild man took for your two children in Braunton Burrows; and here is the Captain's cocked-hat, which some one stole, to counterfeit him. The whole thing was a vile artifice, a delusion, cheat, and mockery."

I need not repeat how I set this before him, but only his mode of receiving it. At first he seemed wholly confused and stunned, pressing his head with both hands, and looking as if he knew not where he was. Then he began to enter slowly into what I was telling him, but without the power to see its bearing, or judge how to take it. He examined the dolls, and patted them, and added them to a whole school which he kept with two candles burning before them. And then he said, "They have long been missing: right glad am I to recover them."

Then for a long time he sate in silence, and in his former attitude, quite as if his mind relapsed into its old condition: and verily I began to think that the only result of my discovery, so far as concerned poor Squire Philip, would be a small addition to his gallery of dolls. However, after a while he turned round, and cried with a piercing gaze at me—

"Mariner, whoever you are, I do not believe one word of your tale. The hat is as new and the dolls are

as fresh as if they were buried yesterday. And I take that to be the truth of it. How many years have I been here? I know not. Bring me a looking-glass."

He pointed to a small mirror which stood among his precious relics. Being mounted with silver and tortoise-shell, this had been (as they told me afterwards) the favourite toy of his handsome wife. When I handed him this, he took off his hat, and shook his white hair back, and gazed earnestly, but without any sorrow, at his mournful image. "Twenty years at least," he pronounced it, in a clear decided voice; "twenty years it must have taken to have made me what I am. Would twenty years in a dripping sand-hill leave a smart gentleman's laced hat and a poor little baby's dolls as fresh and bright as the day they were buried? Old mariner, I am sorry that you should lend yourself to such devices. But perhaps you thought it right."

This, although so much perverted, made me think of his father's goodness and kind faith in every one. And I saw that here was no place now for any sort of argument.

"Your Honour is altogether wrong," I answered, very gently: "the matter could have been, at the utmost, scarcely more than eight years ago, according to what they tell me. And if you can suppose that a man of my rank and age and service would lend himself to mean devices, there are at least thirty of your retainers and of honest neighbours who have seen the whole thing and can swear to its straightforwardness. And your Honour, of course, knows everything a thousand times better than I do; but of sand, and how it keeps things everlasting (so long as dry) your Honour seems, if I may say it, to have no experience."

He did not take the trouble to

answer, but fell back into his old way of sitting, as if there was nothing worth argument.

People say that every man is like his father in many ways; but the first resemblance that I perceived between Sir Philip and his elder son was, that the Squire arose and bowed with courtesy as I departed. Upon the whole, this undertaking proved a disappointment to me. And it mattered a hundredfold as much that our noble General was not only vexed, but angered more than one could hope of him. Having been treated a little amiss, I trusted that Sir Philip would contribute to my self-respect by also feeling angry. Still I did not desire more than just enough to support me, or at the utmost to overlap me, and give me the sense of acting aright by virtue of appeasing him. But on the present occasion he showed so large and cloudy a shape of anger, wholly withdrawn from my sight (as happens with the Peak of Teneriffe)—also he so clearly longed to be left alone, and meditate, that I had no chance to offer him more than three opinions. All these were of genuine value at the time of offering; and must have continued so to be, if the facts had not belied them. Allowing for this adverse view, I will not even state them.

Nevertheless I had the warmest invitation to abide, and he welcome to the best that turned upon any of all the four great spits, or simmered and lifted the pot-lids suddenly for a puff of fine smell to come out in advance. To a man of less patriotic feeling this might thus have commended itself. But to my mind there was nothing visible in these hills and valleys, and their sloping towards the sea, which could make a true Welshman doubt the priority of Welshland. For with us the sun is better, and the air moves less

in creases, and the sea has more of rapid gaiety in breaking. The others may have higher cliffs, or deeper valleys down them, also (if they like to think so) darker woods for robbers' nests—but our own land has a sweetness, and a gentle liking for us, and a motherly pleasure in its face when we come home to it, such as no other land may claim—according to my experience.

These were my sentiments as I climbed, upon the ensuing Sunday, a lofty hill near the Ilfracombe road, commanding a view of the Bristol Channel and the Welsh coast beyond it. The day was so clear that I could follow the stretches and curves of my native shore, from the low lands of Gower away in the west through the sandy ridges of Aberavon and the grey rocks of Sker and Porthcawl, as far as the eastern cliffs of Dunraven and the fading bend of St Donat's. The sea between us looked so calm, and softly touched with shaded lights and gentle varia-

tions, also in unruffled beauty so fostering and benevolent, that the white-sailed coasters seemed to be babies fast asleep on their mother's lap. "How long is this mere river to keep me from my people at home?" I cried: "it looks as if one could jump it almost! A child in a cockle-shell could cross it."

At these words of my own, a sudden thought which had never occurred before, struck me so that my brain seemed to buzz. But presently reason came to my aid; and I said, "No, no; it is out of the question; without even a thread of sail! I must not let these clods laugh at me for such a wild idea. And the name in the stern of the boat as well, downright 'Santa Lucia!' Chowne must have drowned those two poor children, and then rehearsed this farce of a burial with the Captain's hat on, to enable his man to swear truly to it. Tush, I am not in my dotage yet. I can see the force of everything."

CHAPTER L.—A BRAVE MAN RUNS AWAY.

It may be the power of honesty, or it may be strength of character coupled with a more than usual brightness of sagacity—but whatever the cause may be, the result seems always to be the same, in spite of inborn humility—to wit, that poor old Davy Llewellyn, wherever his ups and downs may throw him, always has to take the lead! This necessity, as usual, seemed to be arising now at Narnton Court—the very last place in the world where one could have desired it. Since the present grand war began (with the finest promise of lasting, because nobody knows any cause for it, so that it must be a law of nature), I have not found much occasion to dwell upon common inland incidents. These are in nature

so far below all maritime proceedings, that a sailor is tempted to forget such trifles as people are doing ashore.

Even upon Holy Scripture (since the stirring times began for me henceforth to chronicle), it has not been my good-luck to be able to sit and think of anything. Nevertheless I am almost sure that it must have been an active man of the name of Nehemiah, who drew for his rations every day, one fat ox, and six choice sheep, and fowls of order various. All of these might I have claimed, if my capacity had been equal to this great occasion. Hence it may be well supposed that the kitchen was my favourite place, whenever I deigned to enter into converse with the servants. At first the

head-cook was a little shy ; but I put her soon at her ease by describing (from my vast breadth of experience) the proper manner to truss and roast a man—and still better, a woman. The knowledge I displayed upon a thing so far above her level, coupled with my tales of what we sailors did in consequence, led this excellent creature so to appreciate my character, and thirst for more of my narratives, that I never could come amiss, even at dishing-up time.

But here I fell into a snare, as every seaman is sure to do when he relaxes his mind too much in the charms of female society. Not concerning the cook herself—for I gave her to understand at the outset that I was not a marrying man, and she (possessing a husband somewhere) resolved not to hanker after me—but by means of a fair young maid, newly apprenticed to our head-cook, although of a loftier origin. More than once, while telling my stories, I had obtained a little glimpse of long bright ringlets flashing and of shy young eyes just peeping through the hatch of the scullery-door, where the huckaback towel hung down from the roller. And then, on detection, there used to ensue a very quick fumbling of small red hands, as if being dried with a desperate haste in the old jack-towel ; and then a short sigh, and light feet retiring.

When this had happened for three or four times, I gave my head-cook a sudden wink, and sprang through the scullery-door and caught the little red hands in the fold of the towel, and brought forth the owner, in spite of deep blushes, and even a little scream or two. Then I placed her in a chair behind the jack-chains, and continued my harrowing description of the way I was larded for roasting once ; by a score of unclothed Gabooners. Also how the skewers of bar-wood thrust in to

make me of a good rich colour, when I should come to table, had not that tenacity which our English wood is gifted with ; so that I was enabled to shake (after praying to God for assistance) my right arm out, and then my left ; and after clapping both together (to restore circulation), it came providentially into my head to lay hold of the spit and charge them. And then ensued such a scene as I could not even think of laying before young and delicate females.

This young girl, whose name was “Polly,” always (at this pitch of terror) not only shivered but shuddered so, and needed support for her figure beyond the power of stays to communicate, also let such tears begin to betray themselves and then retreat, and then come out and defy the world, with a brave sob at their back almost,—that I do not exaggerate in saying how many times I had the pleasure of roasting myself for the sake of them.

However, it always does turn out that pleasures of this sort are transient ; and I could not have been going on with Polly more than ten days at the utmost, when I found myself in a rare scrape, to be sure. And this was the worse, because Sir Philip so strongly desired my presence now, perhaps in the vain hope of my convincing that obstinate Squire of his brother's innocence, when that brother should return.

Now I need not have spoken as yet of Miss Polly, if she had been but a common servant, because in that case her peace of mind would have been of no consequence to the household. But, as it happened, she was a person of no small importance, by reason of the very lofty nature of her connections : for she was no less than genuine niece to the lady-housekeeper Mrs Cockhanterbury herself. And hence she became the innocent cause of my

departure from Narnton Court, before I had time to begin my inquiries about the two poor little children. For this I had made up my mind to do, as soon as that strange idea had crossed it, while I was gazing upon the sea ; and my meaning was to go through all the traces that might still be found of them, and the mode of their disappearance. It is true that this resolve was weakened by a tempest which arose that very same evening after the Channel had looked so insignificant, and which might have been expected after that appearance. Nevertheless I must have proceeded according to my intention, if my heart had not been too much for me in the matter of Polly Cockhanterbury. Being just now in my sixtieth year, I could not prove such a coxcomb, of course, as to imagine that a pretty girl of two-and-twenty could care for me, so that no course remained open to me as an honourable man and gallant British officer, who studies his own peace of mind, except to withdraw from the neighbourhood. And in this resolution I was confirmed by Mrs Cockhanterbury's reluctance to declare in a binding manner her intentions towards her niece. Also by finding that somehow or other the whole of the ground-floor at Narnton Court had taken it into their heads to regard me as a man of desirable substance. It is possible that in larger moments, when other people were boasting, I may have insisted a little too much upon my position as landowner in the parish of Newton Nottage. Also I may have described too warmly my patronage of the schoolmaster, and investment of cash with a view to encourage the literature of the parish. But I never could have said—what all of them deposed to—such a very strong untruth, as to convey the conclusion (even to a Devonshire state of mind), that

Colonel Lougher and I divided the whole of the parish between us !

Be that as it may, there was not any maid over thirty who failed to set her cap at me, and my silver hair was quite restored to a youthful tinge of gold. Hence I was horrified at the thought that Polly might even consent to have me for the sake of my property, and upon discovering its poetical existence, lead me a perfectly wretched life, as bad as that of poor Heaviside. So that, in spite of all attractions, and really serious business, and the important duty of awaiting the Captain's return from Pomeroy Castle, and even in spite of Jerry Toms' offer to take Polly off my hands—as if she would say a word to him !—and all the adjurations of poor Heaviside, who had defied his wife (all the time I was there to back him up), and now must have to pay out for it—what did I do but agree to doff my uniform, and work my passage on board the *Majestic*, a fore-and-aft-rigged limestone boat, of forty-eight tons and a half ! Of course she was bound on the usual business of stealing the good Colonel Lougher's rocks, but I distinctly stipulated to have nothing to do with that.

My popularity now was such, with all ranks of society, also I found myself pledged for so many stories that same evening, that I imparted to none except Sir Philip, and Polly, and Jerry Toms, and Heaviside, and one or two more, the scheme of my sudden departure. My mind was on the point of changing when I beheld sweet Polly's tears, until I felt that I must behave, at my time of life, as her father would ; because she had no father.

When I brought the *Majestic* into shallow water off the Tuskar, every inch of which I knew, it was no small comfort to me that I could

not see the shore. For years, I had longed to see that shore, and dreamed of it perpetually, while tossing ten thousand miles away; and now I was glad to have it covered with the twilight foginess. It suited me better to land at night, only because my landing would not be such as I was entitled to. And every one knows how the Navy and Army drop in public estimation, when the wars seem to be done with. Therefore I expected little; and I give you my word that I got still less.

It may have been over eleven o'clock, but at any rate nothing to call very late, just at the crest of the summer-time, when I gave three good strong raps at the door of my own cottage, knowing exactly where the knots were. I had not met a single soul to know me, or to speak my name, although the moon was a quarter old, and I found a broken spar, and bore it as I used to bear my fishing-pole. No man who has not been long a-roving can understand all the fluttering ways of a man's heart when he comes home again. How he looks at every one of all the old houses he knows so well; at first as if he feared it for having another piece built on, or grander people inside of it. And then upon finding this fear vain, he is almost ready to beg its pardon for not having looked at it such a long time. It is not in him to say a word to, or even about, the children coming out thus to stare at him. All the children he used to know are gone to day's work long ago; and the new ones would scarcely trust him so as to suck a foreign lollipop. He knows them by their mothers; but he cannot use their names to them.

There is nothing solid dwelling for a poor man long away, except the big trees that lay hold upon the ground in earnest, and the tombstones keeping up his right to the

parish churchyard. Along the wall of this I glanced, with joy to keep outside of it; while I struck, for the third time strongly, at not being let into mine own house.

At last a weak and faltering step sounded in my little room, and then a voice came through the latch-hole, "Man of noise, how dare you thus? you will wake up our young lady."

"Master Roger, let me in. Know you not your own landlord?" The learned schoolmaster was so astonished that he could scarcely draw back the bolt. "Is it so? Is it so indeed? 'I thank the Lord for sending thee,'" was all he could say, while he stood there shaking both my hands to the very utmost that his slender palms could compass.

"Friend Llewellyn," he whispered at last, "I beg thy pardon heartily, for having been so rude to thee. But it is such a business to hush the young lady; and if she once wakes she talks all the night long. I fear that her mind is almost too active, for a maid of her tender years."

"What young lady do you mean?" I asked; "is Bunny become a young lady now?"

"Bunny!" he cried, with no small contempt; then perceiving how rude this was to me, began casting about for apologies.

"Never mind that," I said; "only tell me who this wonderful young lady is."

"Miss Andalusia, the 'Maid of Sker,' as every one now begins to call her. There is no other young lady in the neighbourhood, to my knowledge."

"Nor in the whole world for you, I should say, by the look of your eyes, Master Roger Berkrolles. Nevertheless put your coat on, my friend, and give your old landlord a bit to eat. I trow that the whole of my house does not belong even

to Miss Delushy. Have I not even a granddaughter?"

"To be sure, and a very fine damsel she is, ay, and a good and comely one; though she hath no turn for erudition. What we should do without Bunny, I know not. She is a most rare young housewife."

The tears sprang into my eyes at this, as I thought of her poor grandmother, and I gave Master Berkolles' hand a squeeze which brought some into his as well.

"Let me see her," was all I said; "it is not easy to break her rest, unless she is greatly altered."

"She is not in bed; she is singing her young friend to sleep. I will call her presently."

This was rather more, however, than even my patience could endure: so I went quietly up the stairs, and pushing the door of the best room gently, there I heard a pretty voice, and saw a very pretty sight. In a little bed which seemed almost to shine with cleanliness, there lay a young girl fast asleep, but lying in such a way that none who had ever seen could doubt of her. That is to say, with one knee up, and the foot of the other leg thrown back, and showing through the bed-clothes, as if she were running a race in sleep. And yet with the back laid flat, and sinking into the pillow deeply; while a pair of little restless arms came out and strayed on the coverlet. Her full and lively red lips were parted, as if she wanted to have a snore, also her little nose well up, and the rounding of the tender cheeks untrimmed to the maiden oval. Down upon these dark lashes hung, fluttering with the pulse of sleep; while heavy clusters of curly hair, dishevelled upon the pillow, framed the

gentle curve of the forehead and smiling daintiness of the whole.

Near this delicate creature sate, in a bending attitude of protection, a strong and well-made girl, with black hair, jet-black eyes, and a rosy colour spread upon a round plump face. She was smiling as she watched the effect of an old Welsh air which she had been singing—"through the livelong night." To look at her size and figure, you would say that her age was fourteen at least; but I knew that she was but twelve years old, as she happened to be our Bunny.

You may suppose that this child was amazed to see her old Granny again once more, and hardly able to recognise him, except by his voice, and eyes, and manner, and a sort of way about him such as only relations have. For really, if I must tell the truth, the great roundness of the world had taken such a strong effect upon me, that I had not been able to manage one straight line towards Newton Nottage for something over six years now. Perhaps I have said that the Admiralty did not encourage our correspondence; and most of us were very well content to allow our dear friends to think of us. So that by my pay alone could my native parish argue whether I were alive or dead.

It would not become me to enter into the public rejoicing upon the morrow, after my well-accustomed face was proved to be genuine at the "Jolly." There are moments that pass our very clearest perception, and judgment, and even our strength to go through them again. And it was too early yet—except for a man from low latitudes—to call for rum-and-water. The whole of this I let them know, while capable of receiving it.

CHAPTER LI.—TRIPLE EDUCATION.

Master Roger Berkrolles had proved himself a schoolmaster of the very driest honesty. This expression, upon afterthought, I beg to use expressly. My own honesty is of a truly unusual and choice character; and I have not found, say a dozen men, fit anyhow to approach it. But there is always a sense of humour, and a view of honour, wagging in among my principles to such an extent that they never get dry, as the multiplication-table does. Master Berkrolles was a man of too much mind for joking.

Therefore, upon the very first morning after my return, and even before our breakfast-time, he poured me out such a lot of coin as I never did hope to see, himself regarding them as no more than so many shells of the sea to count. All these he had saved from my pay in a manner wholly beyond my imagination, because, though I love to make money of people, I soon let them make it of me again. And this was my instinct now; but Roger laid his thin hand on the heap most gravely, and through his spectacles watched me softly, so that I could not be wroth with him.

"Friend Llewellyn, I crave your pardon. All this money is lawfully yours; neither have I, or anybody, the right to meddle with it. But I beg you to consider what occasions may arise for some of these coins hereafter. Also, if it should please the Lord to call me away while you are at sea, what might become of the dear child Bunny, without this mammon to procure her friends? Would you have her, like poor Andalusia, dependent upon charity?"

"Hush!" I whispered; too late, however, for there stood Bardie herself, a slim, light-footed, and graceful child, about ten years old just

then, I think. Her dress of slate-coloured stuff was the very plainest of the plain, and made by hands more familiar with the needle than the scissors. No ornament, or even change of colour, was she decked with, not so much as a white crimped frill for the fringes of hair to dance upon. No child that came to the well (so long as she possessed a mother) ever happened to be dressed in this denying manner. But two girls blessed with good stepmothers, having children of their own, were indued, as was known already, with dresses cut from the self-same remnant. Now, as she looked at Roger Berkrolles with a steadfast wonder, not appearing for the moment to remember me at all, a deep spring of indefinite sadness filled her dark grey eyes with tears.

"Charity!" she said at last: "if you please, sir, what is charity?"

"Charity, my dear, is kindness; the natural kindness of good people."

"Is it what begins at home, sir; as they say in the copy-books?"

"Yes, my dear; but it never stops there. It is a most beautiful thing. It does good to everybody. You heard me say, my dear child, that you are dependent on charity. It is through no fault of your own, remember; but by the will of God. You need not be ashamed to depend on the kindness of good people."

Her eyes shone, for a moment, with bright gratitude towards him for reconciling her with her pride; and then being shy at my presence perhaps, she turned away, just as she used to do, and said to herself very softly—"I would rather have a home though—I would rather have a home, and a father and mother of my own, instead of beautiful charity."

Master Berkrolles told me, when she was gone, that many children of

the place had no better manners than to be always shouting after her, when coming back from the sand-hills, "Where's your father? Where's your mother? Where's your home, Delushy?" This, of course, was grievous to her, and should never have been done; and I let Roger know that his business was to stop any scandal of this kind. But he declared that really the whole of his mind was taken up, and much of his body also, in maintaining rule and reason through the proper hours. After school-time it was not the place of the schoolmaster, but of the parson of the parish, or by deputy churchwardens, or failing them the clerk, and (if he were out of the way) the sexton, to impress a certain tone of duty on the young ones. Especially the sexton need not even call his wife to help, if he would but have the wit to cultivate more young thoughtfulness, by digging a grave every other day, and trusting the Lord for orders.

It was not long before Delushy learned some memory of me, partly with the aid of Bunny, partly through the ship I made—such as no other man could turn out—partly through my uniform, and the rest of it by means of goodness only can tell what. A man who is knocked about, all over rounds, and flats, and sides of mountains, also kicked into and out of every hole and corner, and the strong and weak places of the earth, and upset after all the most by his fellow-creatures' doings, although he may have started with more principle than was good for him, comes home, in the end, to look at results far more than causes.

This was exactly mine own case. I can hardly state it more clearly. I wanted no praise from anybody; because I felt it due to me. A fellow who doubts about himself may value approbation; and such was

the case with me, perhaps, while misunderstood by the magistrates. But now all the money which I had saved, under stewardship of Berkolles, enabled all my household to stand up and challenge calumny.

There is a depth of tender feeling in the hearts of Welshmen, such as cannot anywhere else be discovered by a Welshman. Heartily we love to find man or woman of our own kin (even at the utmost nip of the calipers of pedigree) doing anything which reflects a spark of glory on us. Of this man, or woman even, we make all the very utmost, to the extremest point where truth assuages patriotism. The whole of our neighbourhood took this matter from a proper point of view, and sent me such an invitation to a public dinner, that I was obliged to show them all the corners of the road, when the stupid fellows thought it safer to conduct me home again.

Upon that festive occasion, also, Sandy Macraw took a great deal too much, so entirely in honour of me that I felt the deepest goodwill towards him before the evening was over, even going so far, it appears, as to discharge him from all back-rent for the use of my little frigate. I certainly could not remember such an excess of generosity, upon the following morning; until he pulled off his hat and showed me the following document inscribed with a pencil on the lining: "Dearest and best of friends,—After the glorious tribute paid by the generous Scotchman to the humble but warm-hearted Cambrian, the latter would be below contempt if he took a penny from him. Signed DAVID LLEWELLYN; witness Rees Hopkins, chairman, his mark." After this, and the public manner of my execution, there was nothing to be said, except that Sandy Macraw was below contempt for turning to inferior use the flow of our finest feelings.

Therefore I went, with some indignation, to resume possession of my poor boat, which might as well have been Sandy's own, during the last five years and more. However, I could not deny that the Scotchman had kept his part of the contract well, for my boat was beautifully clean and in excellent repair; in a word, as good as new almost. So I put Miss Delushy on board of her, with Bunny for the lady's-maid, and finding a strong ebb under us, I paddled away towards Sker and landed bravely at Pool Tavan.

For poor Black Evan lay now in our churchyard by the side of his five bold sons, having beheld the white horse as plainly as any of the Coroner's jury. The reason was clear enough to all who knew anything of medicine, to wit, his unwise and pernicious step in prostituting his constitution to the use of water. If any unfortunate man is harassed with such want of self-respect, and utter distrust of Providence, as well as unpleasantness of behaviour towards all worthy neighbours, and black ingratitude to his life, as to make a vow for ever never to drink any good stuff again, that man must be pitied largely; but let no one speak harshly of him; because he must so soon be dead. And this in half the needful time, if formerly he went on too much.

Poor Moxey now, with young Watkin only, carried on this desert farm. It was said that no farmer, ever since the Abbots were turned out, could contrive to get on at Sker. One after the other failed to get a return for the money sunk into the desolate sandy soil. Black Evan's father took the place with a quarter of a bushel heaped with golden guineas of Queen Anne. And very bravely he began, but nothing ever came of it, except that he hanged himself at last, and left his son to go on with it. What

chance was there now for Moxey, with no money, and one son only, and a far better heart than head?

Nevertheless she would not hear for one moment of such a thing as giving up Delushy. This little maid had a way of her own of winding herself into people's hearts, given to her by the Lord Himself, to make up for hard dealings. Moxey loved her almost as much as her own son Watkin, and was brought with the greatest trouble to consent to lose her often, for the sake of learning. Because there never could be at Sker the smallest chance of growing strongly into education. And everybody felt that Bardie was of a birth and nature such as demanded this thing highly. However, even this public sentiment might have ended in talk alone, if Lady Bluett had not borne in mind her solemn pledge to me. Roger Berkrolles would have done his best, of course, to see to it; but his authority in the parish hung for a while upon female tongues, which forced him to be most cautious. So that I, though seven years absent, am beyond doubt entitled to the credit of this child's scholarship. I had seen the very beginning of it, as I must have said long ago, but what was that compared with all that happened in my absence? Berkrolles was a mighty scholar (knowing every book almost that ever in reason ought to have been indited, or indicted), and his calm opinion was, that "he never had led into letters such a mind as Bardie's!"

She learned more in a week almost, than all the rising generation sucked in for the quarter. Not a bit of milching knowledge could he gently offer her, ere she dragged the whole of it out of his crop, like a young pigeon feeding. And sometimes she would put such questions

that he could do nothing more than cover both his eyes up!

All such things are well enough for people who forget how much the body does outweigh the mind, being meant, of course, to do so, getting more food, as it does, and able to enjoy it more, by reason of less daintiness. But for my part, I have always found it human prudence to prevent the mind, or soul, or other parts invisible, from conspiracy to outgo, what I can see, and feel, and manage, and be punished for not heeding—that is to say, my body.

Now the plan arranged for Bardi was the most perfect that could be imagined, springing from the will of Providence, and therefore far superior to any human invention. Master Berkrolles told me that a human being may be supposed to consist principally of three parts—the body, which is chiefly water (this I could not bear to hear of, unless it were salt water, which he said might be the case with me); the mind, which may be formed of air, if it is formed of anything; and the soul, which is strong spirit, and for that reason keeps the longest. Accordingly this homeless maiden's time was so divided that her three parts were provided for, one after other, most beautifully. She made her rounds, with her little bag, from Sker to Candleston Court, and thence to Master Berkrolles at my cottage, and back again to Sker, when Moxy could not do without her. She would spend, perhaps, a fortnight at Candleston, then a fortnight in Newton village, and after that a month at Sker, more or less, as might be, according to the weather and the chances of conveyance. At Candleston, of course, she got the best of bodily food as well; but Lady Bluett made a point of attending especially to her soul, not in a sanctimonious way, but concerning grace, and manners, and the love of

music, and the handling of a knife and fork, and all the thousand little things depending on that part of us. And here she was made a most perfect pet, and wore very beautiful clothes, and so on; but left them all behind and went as plain as a nun to Newton, as soon as the time arrived for giving her mind its proper training. Now when her mind was ready to burst with the piles of learning stored in it, and she could not sleep at night without being hushed by means of singing, Moxy would come from Sker to fetch her, and scold both the Master and Bunny well, for the paleness of Delushy's face, and end by begging their pardon and bearing the child away triumphantly, with Watkin to carry the bag for her. And then for a month there was play, and sea-air, and rocks to climb over, and sand-hills, and rabbits and wild-fowl to watch by the hour, and bathing throughout the summer-time, and nothing but very plain food at regular intervals of fine appetite.

So the over-active mind sank back to its due repose, and the tender cheeks recovered, with kind Nature's nursing, all the bloom the flowers have because they think of nothing. Also the lightsome feel returned, and the native grace of movement, and the enjoyment of good runs, and laughter unrepressed but made harmonious by discipline. And then the hair came into gloss, and the eyes to depths of brightness, and all the mysteries of wisdom soon were tickled out of her.

This was the life she had been leading, now for some six years or more, and being of a happy nature she was quite contented. In the boat I did my utmost, that day, to examine her as to all her recollections of her early history. But she seemed to dwell upon nothing now, except the most trifling incidents,

such as a crab lifting up the cover one day when old Davy was boiling him, or "Dutch" being found with a lot of small Dutches, and nobody knew where they came from. She had no recollection of any boat, or even a Coroner's inquest; and as to papa, and mamma, and brother—she put her hand up to her beautiful forehead, to think, and then wondered about them. Having cleverly brought you thus to a proper acquaintance with the present situation, I really think that you must excuse me from going into all Moxy's transports called forth by the sight of me. In spite of all that I always say in depreciation of

myself (ay, and often mean it too), nobody can have failed to gather that my countrymen at large, and (which matters more) my countrywomen, take a most kind view of me. And it would have been hard indeed if Moxy could not find a tear or two. And Watkin now was a fine young fellow, turned of twenty some time ago, straight as an arrow, and swift as a bird, but shy as a trout in a mountain-stream. From a humble distance he admired Miss Delushy profoundly, and was ever at her beck and call; so that of course she liked him much, but entertained a feminine contempt for such a fellow.

CHAPTER LII.—GREAT MARCH OF INTELLECT.

Now I come to larger actions, and the rise of great events, and the movements of mankind, enough to make their mother earth tremble, and take them for suicides, and even grudge her bosom for their naked burial. Often had I longed for war, not from love of slaughter, but because it is so good for us. It calls out the strength of a man from his heart into the swing of his legs and arms, and fills him with his duty to the land that is his mother; and scatters far away small things, and shows beyond dispute God's wisdom, when He made us male and female. The fair sex (after long peace) always want to take the lead of all, having rash faith in their quicker vigour of words and temper. But they prove their goodness always, coming down to their work at once, when the blood flows, and the bones are split into small splinters, and a man dies bravely in their arms, through doing his duty to them. But though war is good, no doubt (till men shall be too good for it), there was not one man as yet in Great Britain, who would have gone of his

own accord into the grand and endless war at this time impending. Master Roger Berkrolles told me that throughout all history (every in and out of which he knew, while pretending otherwise) never had been known such war, and destruction of God's men, as might now be looked for. He said that it was not a question now of nation against nation, such as may be fought out and done with, after rapid victory; neither a piece of mere covetousness for a small advance of dominion; nor even a contest of dynasties, which might prove the tougher one. But that it was universal clash; half of mankind imbittered to a deadly pitch with the other half; and that now no peace could be, till one side was crushed under. These things were beyond my grasp of widest comprehension, neither could I desire a war, begun about nothing, so how. If the Frenchmen insulted our flag, or wanted back some of their islands, or kept us from examining their customs (when imported), no true Briton could hesitate to keep his priming ready.

But at present they were only plucking up courage to affront us, being engrossed with their own looseness, and broad spread of idiocy. For they even went the length of declaring all men to be equal, the whole world common property, and the very names of the months all wrong! After this it was natural, and one might say the only sensible thing they ever did, to deny the existence of their Maker. For it could hardly be argued that the Almighty ever did lay hand to such a lot of scoundrels. Now if these rats of the bilge-hole had chosen to cock their tails in their dirt, and devour one another, pleasure alone need have been the feeling of the human race looking down at them. But the worst of it was that real men, and women, far above them, took up their filthy tricks and antics, and their little buck-jumps, and allowed their judgment so to be taken with grimaces—even as a man who mocks a fit may fall into it—that in every country there were “sympathisers with the great and glorious march of intellect.”

In Devonshire, I had heard none of all this, for none of the servants ever set eyes, or desired to do so, on “public journals.” They had heard of these, but believed them to be very dangerous and wicked things; also devoid of interest, for what was the good of knowing things which anybody else might know? And even if they had taken trouble ever to hear of the great outbreak, they would have replied (until it led to recruiting in their own parish), “Thickey be no consarn to we.”

But in our enlightened neighbourhood things were very different.

There had long been down among us ever so many large-minded fellows, anxious to advance mankind, by great jumps, towards perfection. And in this they showed their wisdom (being all young bachelors) to strive to catch the golden age before they got rheumatics.

However, to men whose life has been touched with the proper grey and brown of earth, all these bright ideas seemed a baseless dance of rainbows. Man’s perfection was a thing we had not found in this world; and being by divine wisdom weaned from human pride concerning it, we could be well content to wait our inevitable opportunity for seeking it in the other world. We had found this world wag slowly; sometimes better, and sometimes worse, pretty much according to the way in which it treated us. Neither had we yet perceived, in the generation newly breeched, any grand advance, but rather a very poor backsliding, from what we were at their time of life. We all like a strong fellow when we see him; and we all like a very bright child, who leaps through our misty sense of childhood. To either of these an average chap knocks under, when quite sure of it. And yet, in our parish, there was but one of the one sort, and one of the other. Bardie, of course, of the new generation; and old Davy of the elder. It vexes me to tell the truth so. But how can I help it, unless I spoil my story?

Ever so many people got a meeting in the chapel up, to sign a paper, and to say that nobody could guess the mischief done by all except themselves. They scouted the French Revolution as the direct work of the devil; and in the very next sen-

* That intelligent view still holds its own. A Devonshire farmer challenged me, the other day, to prove, “Whatt be the gude of the papper, whan any vule can rade un?”—ED^d. M. of S.

tence vowed it the work of the seventh angel, to shatter the Church of England. They came with this rubbish for me to sign; and I signed it (and some of them also) with my well-attested toe and heel.

After such a demonstration, any man of candid mind falls back on himself, to judge if he may have been too forcible. But I could not see my way to any cross-road of repentance; and when I found what good I had done, I wished that I had kicked harder. By doing so, I might have quenched a pestilential doctrine; as every orthodox person told me, when they heard how the fellows ran. But—as my bad-luck always conquers—I had but a pair of worn-out pumps on, and the only toe which a man can trust (through his own defects of discipline) happened to be in hospital now, and short of spring and flavour. Nevertheless some good was done. For Parson Lougher not only praised me, but in his generous manner provided a new pair of shoes for me, to kick harder, if again so visited. And the news of these prevented them.

But even the way these fellows had to rub themselves was not enough to stop the spreading of low opinions; for the strength of my manifestation was impressive rather than permanent. Also all the lower lot of Nonconformists and schismatics ran with their tongues out, like mad dogs, all over the country raving, snapping at every good gentleman's heels, and yelping that the seventh vial was open, and the seventh seal broken. To argue with a gale of wind would show more sense than to try discussion with such a set of ninnies; and when I asked them to reconcile their admiration of atheism with their religious fervour, one of them answered bravely that he would rather wor-

ship the Goddess of Reason than the God of the Church of England.

However, the followers of John Wesley, and all the respectable Methodists, scouted these ribalds as much as we did; and even Hezekiah had the sense to find himself going too far with them, and to repair the seventh seal, and clap it on Hepzibah's mouth. For how could he sell a clock, if time was declared by the trumpet to be no more?

Amid this universal turmoil, uproar, and upheaving, I received a letter from Captain Bampfylde, very short, and without a word of thanks for what I had done for him, but saying that he was just appointed to the *Bellona*, 74, carrying 6 carronades on the poop; that she was fitting now at Chatham, and in two months' time would be at Spithead, where he was to man her. He believed that the greater part of the fine ship's company of the *Thetis* would be only too glad to sail under him, and he was enabled to offer me the master's berth, if I saw fit. He said that he knew my efficiency, but would not have ventured to take this step but for what I had told him about my thorough acquirement of navigation under the care of a learned man. After saying that if I reported myself at Narnton Court by the end of October he would have me cared for and sent on, he concluded with these stirring words:—

“There is a great war near at hand; our country will want every man, young or old, who can fight a gun.”

These last words fixed my resolve. I had not been very well treated, perhaps; at any rate, my abilities had not been recognised too highly, lest they should have to be paid for with a little handsomeness. But a man of large mind allows for this, feeling that the

world, of course, would gladly have him at half-price. But when it came to talking of the proper style to fight a gun, how could I give way to any small considerations? Fuzzy and Ike were stealing rock at this particular period in a new ketch called *The Devil* (wholly in honour of Parson Chowne); and through these worthy fellows, and Bang (now the most trustworthy of all), I sent a letter to Narnton Court, accepting the mastership of his Majesty's ship of the line, *Bellona*.

Now everybody in earnest began to call me "Captain Llewellyn"—not at my own instigation, but in spite of all done to the contrary. The master of a ship must be the captain, they argued, obstinately; and my well-known modesty had the blame of all that I urged against it. But I need not say any more about it; because the war has gone on so long, and so many seamen have now been killed, that the nation has been stirred up to learn almost a little about us.

While I was dwelling on all these subjects, who should appear but Miss Delushy, newly delivered from Candleston Court, on her round of high education? And to my amazement, who but Lieutenant Bluett delivered her? I had not even heard that he was come home; so much does a man, when he rises in life, fail in proper wakefulness! But now he leaped down from the fore-castle, and with a grave and most excellent courtesy, and his bright uniform very rich and noble, and his face outdoing it, forth he led this little lady, who was clad in simple grey. She descended quite as if it was the proper thing to do; and then she turned and kissed the tips of her fingers to him gracefully. And she was not yet eleven years old! How can we be amazed at any revolutions after this?

"Bardie!" I cried, with some

indignation, as if she were growing beyond my control; and she stood on the spring of her toes exactly as she had done when two years old, and offered her bright lips for a kiss, to prove that she was not arrogant. None but a surly bear could refuse her; still my feelings were deeply hurt, that other people should take advantage of my being from home so much, to wean the affections of this darling from her own old Davy, and perhaps to set up a claim for her.

Berkrolles knew what my rights were; and finding him such a quiet man, I gave it to him thoroughly well, before I went to bed that night. I let him know that his staying there depended wholly upon myself; not only as his landlord, but as holding such a position now in Newton, and Nottage, and miles around, that the lifting of my finger would leave him without a scholar or a crust. Also I wished him to know that he must not, as a wretched landsman, take any liberties with me, because I had allowed him gratis to impart to me the vagueness of what he called "Mathematics," in the question of navigation. I made out some; but the rest went from me, through the clearness of my brain (which let things pass through it); otherwise I would have paid him gladly, if he had earned it. But he said (or I may myself have said, to suggest some sense to him) that my brain was now too full of experience for experiments. Of all the knowledge put into me by this good man carefully, and I may say laboriously, I could not call to mind a letter, figure, stroke, or even sign, when I led the British fleet into action, at the battle of the Nile. But it may have all been there, steadily underlying all, coming through great moments, like a quiet perspiration.

But if I could not take much learning, here was some one else

who could; and there could be no finer sight for lovers of education than to watch old Mr Berkrolles and his pupil entering into the very pith of everything. I could not perceive any cause for excitement, in a dull matter of this sort; nevertheless they seemed to manage to get stirred up about it. For when they came to any depth of mystery for fathoming, it was beautiful to behold the long white hair and the short brown curls dancing together over it. That good old Roger was so clever in every style of teaching, that he often feigned not to know a thing of the simplest order to him; so that his pupil might work it out, and have a bit of triumph over him. He knew that nothing puts such speed into little folk and their steps—be they of mind or body—as to run a race with grown-up people, whether nurse or tutor.

But in spite of all these brilliant beams of knowledge now shed over her, our poor Bardie was held fast in an awkward cleft of conscience. I may not have fully contrived to show that this little creature was as quick of conscience as myself almost; although, of course, in a smaller way, and without proper sense of proportions. But there was enough of it left to make her sigh very heavily, lest she might have gone too far in one way or the other. Her meaning had been, from her earliest years, to marry, or be married. She had promised me through my grey whiskers often (with two years to teach her her own mind), never, as long as she lived, to accept any one but old Davy. We had settled it ever so many times, while she sate upon my shoulder; and she smacked me every now and then, to prove that she meant matrimony. Now, when I called to her mind all this, she said that I was an old stupid, and she meant to do just what she liked; though admitting that everybody

wanted her. And after a little thought she told me, crossing her legs (in the true old style), and laying down her lashes, that her uncertainty lay between Master Roger and Mr Bluett. She had promised them both, she did believe, without proper time to think of it; and could she marry them both, because the one was so young and the other so-old? I laid before her that the proper middle age of matrimony could not be attained in this way; though in the present upside down of the world it might come to be thought of. And then she ran away and danced (exactly as she used to do), and came back with her merry laugh to argue the point again with me.

Before I set off for Narnton Court on my way to join the Bellona, Lieutenant Bluett engaged my boat and my services, both with oar and net, for a day's whole pleasure off shore and on. I asked how many he meant to take, for the craft was a very light one; but he answered, "As many as ever he chose, for he hoped that two officers of the Royal Navy knew better than to swamp a boat in a dead calm such as this was." My self-respect derived such comfort from his outspoken and gallant way of calling me a brother officer (as well as from the most delicate air of ignorance which he displayed when I took up a two-guinea piece which happened to have come through my roof at this moment perhaps, or at any rate somehow to be lying in an old tobacco-box on my table), that I declared my boat and self at his command entirely.

We had a very pleasant party, and not so many as to endanger us, if the ladies showed good sense. Colonel Lougher and Lady Bluett, also the lieutenant, of course, and a young lady staying at Candleston Court, and doing her utmost to en-

trap the youthful sailor—her name has quite escaped me—also Delushy, and myself. These were all, or would have been all, if Master Rodney had not chanced, as we marched away from my cottage, with two men carrying hampers, to espy, in the corner of the old well, a face so sad, and eyes so black, that they pierced his happy and genial heart.

"I'll give it to you, you sly minx," I cried, "for an impudent, brazen trick like this. What orders did I give you, Miss? A master of a ship of the line, and not master of his own grandchild!"

The young lieutenant laughed so that the rushes on the sand-hills shook, for he saw in a moment all the meaning of this most outrageous trick. Bunny, forgetting her grade in life, had been crying, ever since she awoke, at receiving no invitation to this great festivity. She had even shown ill-will and jealousy towards Bardie, and a want of proper submission to her inevitable rank in the world. I perceived that these vile emotions grew entirely from the demagogic spirit of the period, which must be taken in hand at once. Wherefore I boxed her ears with vigour, and locked her into an empty cupboard, there to wait for our return, with a junk of bread and a cheese-rind. However, she made her way out, as her father had done with the prison of Dunkirk; and here she was in spite of all manners, good faith, and discipline.

"Let her come; she deserves to come; she shall come," Master Rodney cried; and as all the others said the same, I was forced to give in to it; and upon the whole I was proud perhaps of our Bunny's resolution. Neither did it turn out ill, but rather a good luck for us, because the young lady who wooed the lieutenant proved her entire unfitness for a maritime alliance, by

wanting, before we had long been afloat, although the sea was as smooth as a duck-pond, some one to attend upon her.

Every one knows what the Tuskar Rock is, and the caves under Southern Down; neither am I at all of a nature to dwell upon eating and drinking. And though all these were of lofty order, and I made a fire of wreck-wood (just to broil some collops of a sewin, who came from the water into it, through a revival of my old skill; and to do a few oysters in their shells, with their gravy sputtering, to let us know when they were done, and to call for a bit of butter), no small considerations, or most grateful memories of flavour could have whispered to me twice, thus to try my mouth with waterings over such a cookery. But I have two reasons for enlarging on this happy day; and these two would be four at once, if any one contradicted them.

My chief reason is that poor dear Bardie first obtained a pure knowledge of her desolate state upon that occasion;—at least so far as we can guess what works inside the little chips of skulls that we call babyish. Everybody had spoiled her so (being taken with her lovingness, and real newness of going on, and power to look into things, together with such a turn for play as never can be satiated in a world like ours; not to mention heaps of things which you must see to understand), let me not overdo it now, in saying that this little dear had taken such good education, through my liberal management, as to long to know a little more about herself, perhaps.

This is a very legitimate wish, and deserving of more encouragement than most of us care to give to it; because so many of us are not the waifs and strays, and salvage only, but the dead shipwrecks of ourselves; content with the bottom

of the great deep, only if no shallow fellows shall come diving down for us.

Having the joy of sun and sea, and the gratitude for a most lovely dinner, such as none could take from me, I happened to lie on my oars and think, while all my passengers roved on the rock. They were astray upon bladder-weed, pop-weed, dellusk, oar-weed, ribbons, frills, kelp, wrack, or five-tails—anything you like to call them, without falling over them. My orders were to stand off and on, till the gentry had amused themselves. Only I must look alive; for the Tuskar rock would be two fathoms under water, in about four hours, at a mile and a half from the nearest land.

The sunset wanted not so much as a glance of sea to answer it, but lay hovering quietly, and fading beneath the dark brows of the cliffs; which do sometimes glorify, and sometimes so discourage it. The meaning of the weather and the arrangement of the sky and sea, was not to make a show for once, but to let the sunset gently glide into the twilight, and the twilight take its time for melting into starlight. This I never thus have touched, except in our old island.

There was not a wave to be seen or felt, only the glassy heave of the tide lifted my boat every now and then, or lapped among the wrinkles of the rocks, and spread their fringes. Not a sound was in the air, and on the water nothing, except the little tinkling softness of the drops that feathered off from my suspended oar-blades. Floating round a corner thus, I came upon a sight as gently sad as sky and sea were. A little maid was leaning on a shelf of stone with her hair dishevelled as the kelp it mingled with. Her plain brown hat was cast aside, and her clasped hands hid her face, while her slender feet hung down, and scarcely

cared to paddle in the water that embraced them. Now and then a quiet sob, in harmony with the evening tide, showed that the storm of grief was over, but the calm of deep sorrow abiding.

"What is the matter, my pretty dear?" I asked, after landing, and coaxing her. "Tell old Davy; Captain David will see the whole of it put to rights."

"It cannot be put to yights," she answered, being even now unable to pronounce the *r* aright, although it was rather a lisp than any clear sound that supplied its place; "it never can be put to yights: when the other children had fathers and mothers, God left me outside of them; and the young lady says that I must not aspiya ever to marry a gentleman. I am only fit for Watkin, or Tommy-Toms, or nobody! Old Dyo, why did I never have a father or a mother?"

"My dear, you had plenty of both," I replied; "but they were shipwrecked, and so were you. Only before the storm came on, you were put into this boat somehow, nobody living can tell how, and the boat came safe, though the ship was wrecked."

"This boat!" she cried, spreading out her hands to touch it upon either side—for by this time, I had shipped her—"was it this boat saved me?"

"Yes, you beauty of the world. Now tell me what that wicked girl had the impudence to say to you."

This I need not here set down. Enough that it flowed from jealousy, jealousy of the lowest order, caused by the way in which Lieutenant Rodney played with Bardia. This of course interfered with the lady's chances of spreading nets for him, so that soon she lost her temper, fell upon Delushy, and upbraided her for being no more than an utterly unknown castaway.

A CENTURY OF GREAT POETS, FROM 1750 DOWNWARDS.

NO. VI.—PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY.

It is a very common error in the world, when dealing with persons of genius, and especially with poets, to swamp the man in the writer, and to regard as poet only, an individual probably strong in natural characteristics, and with a most solid and muscular basis of humanity to make a pedestal for his genius. With such poets as those we have already discussed, this idea would be a thoroughly false one, for they were all most distinguishable men apart from their inspired condition, and while no numbers were falling from their lips. But with our present subject the case is different. Shelley was a poet only—an embodied Song—scarcely a man at all. He stands before us with glittering eyes looking out from among the shadows, as his friend Trelawney saw him first—a wild and wayward figure, more like the Faun of the classic imagination, or those strange beautiful beings who dwelt between earth and heaven on the heights of Gothic fancy, than a mere plodding mortal like ourselves. He is a creature whom, though his sins were not passed over by his contemporaries, we who come after can scarcely think of as bearing any weight of moral obligation at all. He has no responsibilities, no duties, except to be happy when he can, and kind, and to sing. Instinctively we feel that here is the being who ought to be Nature's spoilt child. The sun should always shine for him, and his own west wind blow, and the lark make delicious music. His world ought to be that garden in which the sensitive plant flourished. There should be a river for this favourite of earth to float upon in his

boat under the overhanging trees, interrupted by nothing worse than here and there a fragrant copse of water-lilies; or even a delightful mimic sea, a sheltered celestial inlet, in which he could gently dare and safely attain the flowery isles and rosy rocks, with ever a safe piece of silver strand at their feet to beach his fairy vessel. And there should be woods deep and soft, breathing coolness and balmy rest and solitude; and blue mountains, such as are seen only in heaven and Italy. And unseen guardians should wander about, woodland creatures, with penetrating eyes, to charm away all newts and toads, as once they did from Titania's slumbers. To place Wordsworth or Burns in such a scene would be ludicrous; and the puzzled movements of the astonished Titan thus surrounded would move the world to inextinguishable laughter; but with Shelley it would be natural. Those soft shades would caress him like the touch of angels. The dreamy quiet, the soft varieties of bliss, would heal all his wounds. Not heaven nor earth, but this elysium between the two, would be his natural sphere.

It is one of the triumphs of modern civilisation to have placed all the world on the same level before the law; but this rule, though inevitable in public affairs, is, as everybody knows, subject to all manner of modifications at the tribunal of private judgment. There are always some people whom, according to the nature of things, we judge more leniently than others; and some upon whom we find it impossible to put any serious moral stigma, though their offences, ac-

cording to the letter, have been as grievous as those to which in others we allot the deepest condemnation. Even in this point, which would seem the easiest of all, no such thing as equality is possible between man and man. And Shelley is emphatically one of the exceptions against whom the most inexorable Rhadamanthus could wield no sword of justice. As a man, we should be compelled to say that he discharged very badly all the obligations of life, and was commendable in none of its relationships. He surrounded himself with a youthful bravado of infidelity, which most likely meant very little. He was not particular about truth-telling, nor any of those usually necessary moralities. Such weaknesses render a man very objectionable; but they do not affect a Faun one way or another, or alter our opinion of that beautiful woodland creature; and Shelley was much more a Faun than a man. He was sheer poetry only half embodied at any time—a spirit of an intermediary world—a wandering genie—nothing more.

Such a visionary being, however, unless very specially cared for, is apt to come into dismal contact with the harder entities that fill the world. It requires, indeed, even on the part of father and mother, an extreme clearness of vision to be able to perceive that it is a Faun they have to deal with. Even Love erects itself against such a theory—love which is not of its nature tolerant but rather exacting, demanding excellence, or something which it can believe to be excellence, with a voice which is often imperious in its passion. And college dons and university officials are still less likely to perceive the peculiar mental constitution of an offending undergraduate. Neither would it seem that Shelley in his early days had any friend in the least capable of understanding

his character, or treating his peculiarities with wisdom. Therefore, while he was but a boy, his life got astray among all kinds of painful and misleading currents, and the boat which was fit for nothing greater than an encounter with the water-lilies, was forced upon many a rock and down many a rapid. Nothing can be more sad than a premature blight upon a life scarcely yet emerged from the bud, or capable of understanding the miseries which it is precociously capable of inflicting upon itself. Shelley lived but thirty years in this unkindly world. Before twenty of them had passed he had ruined himself in public estimation, estranged himself from his relations, and cut off from before his own wayward feet all possibility of a worthy career. Sad throughout was the fate of the unfortunate poet. Had he not been a poet, men in general would have made small moan over the misfortunes of the young fool who wrecked himself thus wilfully and early. As it is, his life has been the subject of countless comments, attacks, and defences; and as a life, we doubt whether there is much to be said for it one way or another. We give up, accordingly, the vain idea to treat Shelley seriously as a man. Poor wandering soul! he was, after all, little more than a boy when he came to a sudden conclusion in those blue Mediterranean waves which are salt and bitter to some as any Baltic. He was a Poet, a Spirit of the race of Ariel, and him who invoked Sabrina in Milton's stately verse—and it is in this character that we will understand him best.

This exceptional being was born in August 1792, on the very edge of the great Revolution which did all but overturn the world; of a family not at all remarkable in any way, to which henceforward he was a mystery and a trouble unceasing,

as any fairy child is likely to be in a humdrum modern household. He had a sister Elizabeth, who was very like him in appearance, and who in her early youth dabbled in verse like himself; but probably she was no changeling, and the resemblance and natural attraction between them appears to have faded as life went on. Of his childhood little or nothing is known. He went to school at ten, when, being a very delicate-looking and lovely child—a curled darling fresh from the nursery—he had a hard time of it, as is not unusual. At fifteen he went to Eton, where he became, according to all his biographers, the victim of much cruelty, rudeness, and persecution on the part of his comrades. The Eton of the present day has become so peaceable, well-bred, and gentlemanly, that the story of the tortures inflicted upon young Shelley read, to those who know the school, like one of the feverish dreams of his own over-excited imagination. But times were ruder in the beginning of the century; and though we do not know by what rule we are to distinguish between the grotesque adventures of after-days—in which he himself seems to have believed, but nobody else—and those stories which, there being no evidence either for or against them, his biographers take for granted—we are content to believe that the strange spirit which already chafed at all the conditions and restrictions of everyday humanity met with a certain amount of trouble from the ordinary flesh and blood which surrounded him. For one thing, with that curious exaggeration of personal independence which is always to be found in a certain number of boys, he set his face against the fagging system, which probably, like other things, was of a ruder and more disagreeable character than at present. This, which is but an insignificant inci-

dent in his career, is a most valuable indication of his character. Shelley was beyond the reach of those ordinary motives which make the wholesome mass of ordinary boys place their necks cheerfully and even with a certain pride under this yoke, which is of the school's own making—prescribed and sanctioned by that truest of republics, and supported by the public opinion of its members. To such sentiments, which in their way are of an elevated and elevating order, and contain the germ of one of the highest of human principles—voluntary subordination to received law—the poet was absolutely impervious. He was apparently incapable even of conceiving what is meant by *esprit de corps*, the pride of corporate and public being, and the sway of tradition. The whole principle of his life was individuality. Notwithstanding a most generous heart always ready to overflow in the wildest liberality of charity and almsgiving, the higher generosity of obedience was altogether out of his reach. He is like a restive horse that kicks and flings at the very appearance of bit and bridle. To give he is willing—to submit is impossible to him. He is Ariel, but Ariel before either Sycorax or Prospero—the fatal witch or the potent magician—had bound him. The passion of his life, thus developed in its very earliest stage, is resistance. From that instinctive struggle against a school-boy's dearest authority, the law and custom of his school, which he maintained at fifteen, until the time when—alas! not another fifteen years full counted—he had to succumb at last to an adversary no man can successfully resist, the whole scope both of his life and doctrine is vehement opposition—resistance—it does not much matter to what,—to God, to man, to law, to authority—whatever and whosoever opposed him.

Perhaps it is, more almost than its fine poetry, the extraordinary life of this principle, the very essence of his being, which makes his crowning poem, "Prometheus," stand out a great and terrible picture against the pale heavens and the shuddering earth. This was the highest conception he could reach of human superiority. How far it might be the fault of his age, we cannot tell—or how far it was peculiar to his wild and lawless spirit; but it is clear that this great yet inevitably inferior ideal took possession of him. He saw no beauty in that loftier and more splendid faculty of submission which is the theory of Christianity; a harmonious movement in concert with all the music of the spheres, with the will of Heaven, and the courtesies and primitive sympathies of earth, was a thing at which his Faun-eyes glittered wildly, blank with incomprehension. But those eyes glowed with terrible and wonderful vision when the old fable of the resisting Titan, indomitable, unconquerable, awakened their depths. This he understood and felt to the very depths of his ghostly nature. Resistance! it was his ideal of all lofty character, and the principle of his life.

We have not space to linger upon all the wild traditions of his school-boy life, opposed as it was to everything that could be called authority. He was fond of Greek and Latin, and would have gladly studied them by his own will; but the fact that it was the will of the masters that he should learn, set him astray at once. He "would not submit to the trammels of the gradus." "Shelley never would obey;" and in pure perverseness it would seem, because such learning was discouraged, he took to studying chemistry and electricity instead. These scientific studies were prosecuted under the care of a Dr Lind in Windsor, who is report-

ed to have amused himself and the boy by engaging in bouts of cursing, the King and Shelley's father being the special objects of these extraordinary anathemas. But this is the mythological period of the poet's life, and there seems always to have been ground for hoping that such wild stories, when told only by himself, might be mere imaginations. Perhaps the other eccentricities of the time—his sallying forth at midnight to call up the devil, his burning of trees, and similar cantrips—were but imaginations too. Several years later, when he already called himself a man, he informed Godwin in a letter that he had been twice expelled from Eton; but for this statement there does not seem the slightest foundation. According to all likelihood, he left his school much as other boys do whose career there has not been brilliant. He had a quantity of books given him on leaving by his schoolfellows, which some of his biographers take as a mark of their attachment to him—a point as to which old Eton men, knowing the habit of the place, will be less certain. He went to Oxford in the year 1810, before which period he had composed and published two volumes of what we are assured were extremely foolish novels. In Oxford, however, he emerges out of the mythological period in which we can be certain of nothing; and here a prophet and interpreter of Shelley appears to lend us his solid and consequential aid. Mr Jefferson Hogg, who was the poet's chief and most intimate friend during his brief career at the University, is as strange a biographer as such an eccentric and wayward soul could well have. His jaunty patronage of his young hero, his mingled sense of Shelley's superiority to everybody and his own superiority to Shelley, and his delightful confidence that in his

own person he is equally interesting to the world, is full of the frankest *naïveté*; but we believe his book has been accepted as in the main a true record founded upon personal knowledge. Shelley was eighteen at the time when he thus suddenly, as it were, bounds upon the scene, a slim lad with brilliant eyes, stooping shoulders, a voice like a peacock, and the most wonderful "ways" that ever young collegian had. Mr Hogg saw him first at dinner in the hall of University College, a freshman newly arrived—and, beginning to talk to him, became so absorbed that everybody was gone from the hall, and the college servants had come to clear the table, before the two young men came to themselves. Oddly enough, the discussion which so entranced them was upon the relative merits of German and Italian poetry—a discussion which was characteristically and summarily concluded, when the young disputants had retired to Hogg's rooms, by the mutual admission that neither knew anything of the literature he had so hotly defended!

The connection thus formed grew into the most intense friendship, and never was there wilder and stranger sprite out of fairyland than the extraordinary being whom this shrewd Yorkshireman, as unlike himself as possible, grew to adore and patronise. Shelley had brought his scientific tools with him, and lived surrounded by batteries and crucibles, with holes burnt in his carpet, and diabolical odours breathing through his apartments. He lived chiefly on bread, taking his meals in the streets from the loaf which he bought on his way, and tore to pieces as he walked and talked. He took very long walks with a pair of duelling pistols in his pocket, stopping now and then to refresh himself by firing at some mark he had set up: he lingered hours over ponds by

the roadside, throwing stones into them, or floating paper-boats, which he made by the score—an enthralling delight, from which it was scarcely possible to withdraw him. When in his rooms, and engaged in the most earnest conversation, he would suddenly stop, stretch himself "upon the rug before a large fire like a cat," and go to sleep there for two hours, with "his little round head exposed to such a fierce heat that I used to wonder how he was able to bear it." While the Poet-Faun took this sudden refreshment, his mortal friend sat and read, sometimes trying to shelter the head of the sleeper from the fire, and no doubt many a time pondering over him with that wondering consciousness of incongruity which everybody who knew Shelley seems to have vaguely felt, though it did not affect their love for him, or their interest in his fitful ways. Was there ever a more distinct embodiment of the sylvan half-human nature of pagan fancy, with all its wild freedom squeezed into the mere human mould which could not contain it? And a certain pain and disquiet, such as might well belong to a strange spirit wandered out of its sphere, and straying with "blank misgiving" among "worlds not realised," breathes through the whole story. The Faun of Mr Hawthorn's weird romance is not half so true or striking as this real impersonation; for this strange being was gentle as well as wild—tender, affectionate, and carressing, as well as lawless and insubordinate; docile, and yet untamable; a confiding child and unbelieving rebel all in one. Amid the ordinary trite records of human proceedings, an apparition at once so touching and so *bizarre* comes like some gust of wailing wind through the serenity of the common day. He stirs strange depths of feeling in all across whose path he passes

swift and sudden. He opens up a new and weird world, where nothing is known or definite, but all vague, shadowy, wistful. Admiration and pity and wonder surround him; the outside world denounces and vituperates, taking him in its ignorance for a man like others; but the inner circle of spectators, who know him, do not know what to say or think. To them it is impossible to blame; they are baffled, without being aware how it is, by the sweet serenity and purity, in a way, of this creature, who has no conscience or even consciousness of ordinary human moralities. This is evidently the mental position of all who knew him best and loved him most. They form a little circle round the spot in which he plays his pranks; their minds are always full of wonder, mixed with a little affectionate fear, as to what he may do or say next. Indulgently and tenderly they listen to the extraordinary adventures of which, blazing with earnestness and self-belief, he tells them—and smile at each other, and ask furtively what confirmation there is for these marvels. Generally the conclusion is that no confirmation exists at all, and that the story is a simple fable. But not for any earthly inducements, scarcely for his life, would one of those faithful friends allow that Shelley lied. Not so—for Ariel cannot lie. To that sweet sprite his imaginations are as real as facts are to us. We do not know a more remarkable instance of this curious devotion and indulgence, than that which has led Mr Hogg, himself no genius, but a somewhat cynical man of the world, to give the following explanation of Shelley's romancing:—

“He was altogether incapable of rendering an account of any transaction whatsoever according to the strict and precise truth, and the bare, naked

realities of actual life; not through an addiction to falsehood, which he cordially detested, but because he was the creature, the unsuspecting and unresisting victim, of his irresistible imagination.

“Had he written to ten different individuals the history of some proceeding in which he was himself a party and an eyewitness, each of his ten reports would have varied from the rest in essential and important circumstances. The relation given on the morrow would be unlike that of the day, as the latter would contradict the tale of yesterday. Take some examples. He writes:—

“‘I was informed at Oxford that in case I denied the publication, no more would be said. I refused, and was expelled.’

“This is incorrect; no such offer was made, no such information was given; but, musing on the affair as he was wont, he dreamed that this proposal had been declined by him; and thus he had the gratification of believing that he was more of a martyr than he really was. Again he writes thus:—

“‘At the period to which I allude, I was at Eton. No sooner had I formed the principles which I now profess, than I was anxious to disseminate their benefits. This was done without the slightest caution. I was twice expelled, but recalled by the interference of my father.’

“All this is purely imaginary; he never published anything controversial at Eton; he was never expelled—not twice, not once. His poetic temperament was overcome by the grandeur and awfulness of the occasion, when he took up his pen to address the author of ‘Caleb Williams,’ so that the auspicious Apollo, to relieve and support his favourite son, shed over his head a benign vision. He saw himself at his Dame’s, with ‘Political Justice,’ which he had lately borrowed from Dr Lind, open before him. He had read a few pages, and had formed his principles in a moment; he was thrown into a rapture by the truisms, maxims, and paradoxes which he had met with.

“He sees himself in the printing-loft of ‘J. Pote, bibliopola et typographus,’ amongst Eton grammars and Eton schoolbooks, republishing with the rapidity of a dream, and ‘without

the slightest caution,' Godwin's heavy and unsaleable volumes. He sees himself before the Dons, convened and expelled; and, lastly, he beholds the honourable member for Shoreham, weeping on his knees, like Priam at the feet of Achilles, and imploring the less inexorable Dr Keate.

"All this, being poetically true, he firmly and loyally believes, and communicates, as being true in act, fact, and deed, to his venerable correspondent."

The student life which these two most dissimilar friends shared lasted only for about eighteen months. During this time they were inseparable, their vacations only bringing about a new kind of intercourse in the shape of letters. Shelley seems to have taken a fancy—more like the fancy of a girl than a young man—to bring together his friend and his favourite sister Elizabeth—a project which, however, came to nothing. His letters are full of plans to invite Hogg to Field Place; full of confidences regarding Shelley's own brief and hot boy-love for his cousin Harriet, and full of the excellences and graces of Elizabeth. These letters contain many expressions of melancholy; but it seems very unlikely that these meant more than youth's fantastic complaints over its own unhappiness—deepened in this case by a wildly visionary nature, never at home on earth—generally do. This period, however, was very summarily and painfully brought to an end. Shelley, who had all the tricks of his spiritual prototypes, and was never happier than in setting trains of visionary mischief, had acquired, as early as his Eton days, a habit of writing to people whom he knew only by name, on pretence of asking information, but really to lead his unconscious correspondents into argument, and confute them with elder-rich skill and cleverness. One infuriated chemist, treated in this way, threatened, it is said, to write

to his elfish opponent's tutor, and have him whipped: a style of argument which has always been acceptable to the losing side. The same curious system of mischief occupied the young student at Oxford. Instead, however, of the innocent and stupid hoax which gives a pleasure of which he is soon deeply ashamed, to many a youth of eighteen, there was a certain diabolical fun in the pranks of this wild Ariel in cap and gown. His new mode of proceeding was as follows:—

"When he came to Oxford, he retained and extended his former practice without quitting the convenient disguise of an assumed name. His object in printing the short abstract of some of the doctrines of Hume was to facilitate his epistolary disquisitions. It was a small pill, but it worked powerfully: the mode of operation was this:—He enclosed a copy in a letter, and sent it by the post, stating, with modesty and simplicity, that he had met accidentally with that little tract, which appeared unhappily to be quite unanswerable. Unless the fish was too sluggish to take the bait, an answer of refutation was forwarded to an appointed address in London, and then in a vigorous reply he would fall upon the unwary disputant, and break his bones. The strenuous attack sometimes provoked a rejoinder more carefully prepared, and an animated and protracted debate ensued. The party cited, having put in his answer, was fairly in court, and he might get out of it as he could. The chief difficulty seemed to be to induce the party addressed to acknowledge the jurisdiction and to plead; and this, Shelley supposed, would be removed by sending, in the first instance, a printed syllabus instead of written arguments."

This pamphlet was inscribed with the mystic letters Q. E. D., and was sent about the world right and left, raising "rich crops of controversy." It was not intended, Mr Hogg tells us, for the general reader, but only for the metaphysician; and "as it was shorter, so was it plainer, and per-

haps, in order to provoke discussion, a little bolder, than Hume's *Essays*." Its title perhaps was still bolder than its scope. It was called 'The Necessity of Atheism.' Mr Rossetti, the last and perhaps most entirely enthusiastic of all Shelley's biographers, thinks it for the dignity of his hero to give this proceeding the gravest character, and to accept it as a real and absolute profession of the poet's faith. "We shall do well to understand once for all," says this champion, with curious grandiloquence, "that Percy Shelley had as good a right to form and expound his opinions on theology as the Archbishop of Canterbury had to his." This is a somewhat appalling assertion, especially for those unlucky wights who are charged with the care of heroes of nineteen: but perhaps if the Archbishop of Canterbury took to expounding his theology in the shape of anonymous pamphlets, we might be better able to judge of his rights in the comparison. Mr Hogg tells us that his young friend argued "through the love of argument, and because he found a noble joy in the fierce shocks of contending minds." But the authorities about him did not sympathise in this noble joy; and on Ladyday, in the year 1811, Shelley being then about eighteen and a half, he was suddenly summoned before the master of his college. There he was asked abruptly whether he was the author of the pamphlet, a copy of which was shown to him; and on his refusal to reply, was immediately expelled. His friend Hogg, who ventured to remonstrate, had the same summary sentence of banishment pronounced upon him; and next morning both lads, in such a state of excitement, and with such a sense of wrong, as must have been delightful to them amid all its bitterness, left the University. Hogg intimates, in the calmness of after-reflection, that

he thinks they might have been allowed delay had they condescended to ask it; and that the reputation of the college having been saved by such an appearance of sharp action, they might have been tacitly allowed to remain the ordinary time. But the young blood was up, even of the steadier student, and they rushed up to London together, blazing with their consciousness of wrong.

This was the origin of Shelley's quarrels with his family. Perhaps his college was to blame for the precipitate and arbitrary manner in which this violent step was taken; but it is difficult to see how the authorities could have winked at such a production as the 'Necessity of Atheism,' or the anonymous combats of its compiler. One of Shelley's biographers tells us that Hogg's father never forgave, and went to his grave without ever again seeing, his son; but Mr Shelley, much-abused man, was not so hard upon the greater culprit. He did see his prodigal, and some vague negotiations arose between them which it is difficult to make out, at least from Shelley's account, though the father is very simple and very precise in his demands, according to a letter in his odd and complicated style, which is given in Mr Hogg's book; where all he asks is that his son would return home, give up communication with his friend Hogg, and place himself under the care of a tutor selected by his father. These terms, however, were utterly unacceptable to the rebellious spirit to which they were addressed; and while Hogg, more dutiful, returned to his native county to study in York the humble but honourable trade of conveying, Shelley remained in London in Poland Street, not an attractive region, in lodgings which he had been attracted to by the paper with which the walls were covered, and which was printed in imitation of

a trellis overgrown with grapes! Here and elsewhere in London he remained, with occasional visits to his home in the country, and the houses of other relatives, till the end of August, when the scenes suddenly shifted, and a new chapter began in his career.

It is not easy to know how the boy-poet lived during this interval. Mr Rossetti tells us it was on the little savings of his sisters, which they sent to him by means of one of their schoolfellows, Harriet Westbrook, a beautiful girl of sixteen. Whether this was so or not—and the fact that Shelley himself positively informed Hogg in May: "I have come to terms with my father. I call them very good ones. I am to possess £200 per annum," makes it unlikely—yet it is certain that Harriet was at school with Shelley's sisters, though of much inferior condition, her father being the keeper of a tavern—and that he became acquainted with her through their means. The philosopher of nineteen had a great many conversations upon profound and interesting subjects with the open-minded and lovely-faced listener of sixteen, who, for her part, was very sick of being at school, and of all the restraints which generally limit the independence of the British subject at that age. No doubt she learned a great deal from Shelley, who informs his friend on one occasion that "Miss Westbrook is reading Voltaire's '*Dictionnaire Philosophique*,'" perhaps not quite the kind of literature most appropriate in the circumstances. A little later he reproves Hogg gravely for the vulgar nonsense of supposing him to be in love with Harriet; but in his very next letter announces to him, that in consequence of the brutal tyranny of Harriet's father, "who has persecuted her in the most horrible way by endeavouring

to compel her to go to school," "*she* has thrown herself on my protection." This conclusion, equally mad and foolish on the girl's side, is, however, received on the boy's with very highly honourable sentiment. He is staggered for the moment, and reels under the "flattering distinction;" but whereas he had expressed a very unfavourable opinion of marriage a short time before, he now makes up his mind to try and be converted to it. "Marriage, Godwin says, is hateful, detestable," he cries, in the beginning of May; "a kind of ineffable sickening disgust seizes my mind when I think of this most despotic, most unrequired fetter which prejudice has forged to confine its energies." But in August, as soon as this startling prospect has opened upon him, he writes to his friend, "I will hear your arguments for matrimonialism;" and soon after declares that the plea of "impracticability, and, what is even worse, the disproportionate sacrifice which the female is called upon to make—these arguments . . . I cannot withstand." It seems to us that there is something extremely honourable to the lawless youth in this sudden conversion. So far from rejecting the principle of marriage in order to excuse his own passions, he becomes converted to the bond distasteful to him, as soon as the responsibility of another's happiness is thrown on his astonished shoulders. Had he, with his avowed principles and ruined character, carried off the imprudent girl who threw herself on his protection, without troubling himself about the results, it would have been perfectly natural and in character. But there is a gleam of nobleness in this sudden pause which comes in the midst of his excitement—this thought for the other who trusts herself to him, which is equally fine and unexpected. To our thinking, it is per-

haps the finest thing in all Shelley's life.

He had nowhere expressed any love for Harriet before this. He had spoken much of her, it is true, as a young man does of a girl to whom he is being gradually attracted; but, it would seem, was still far from having reached anything like passion, when the foolish impatient young creature thus took matters into her own hands. Shelley, however, does not appear to have ever thought of resisting. With the same high honour which we have just remarked upon, it is evident that he held himself committed to Harriet as soon as she had thus committed herself to him—a fact which shows that, under all the wildness of his strange nature, the soul of a true and knightly gentleman existed in him. He took her to Edinburgh, and married her there, according to his friend's account; and there, for the first time since their Oxford adventure, Hogg saw again his "incomparable friend." The incomparable friend was nineteen, and his bride sixteen. They had as much knowledge of the world between them as two babies; and they had, or thought they had, two hundred a-year, and the displeasure and alienation of all their friends. But none of these things troubled the serenity of these dream-creatures. Never was there a picture of more absolute yet pretty foolishness. The three roamed about together, the baby-pair being of another strain from those impassioned lovers who dislike the presence of a third party; and at home in their lodgings Harriet read aloud the most proper and instructive of books, and was ever serene, blooming, smiling, neat, and imperturbable—one would have said the very wife for an excitable and half-crazed poet—a warm, placid, steady prop for him to lean upon. To be sure, Nemesis arrived after a

few pleasant weeks, in the shape of a grim schoolmistress-like elder sister, who kept them all in order. But except for this uncomfortable alien element, the match would not seem at first to have been at all an unsuccessful one. Harriet was always ready to pack up and be off at an hour's notice. She was ready to move into Wales or Ireland or Cumberland, wherever novelty and Shelley bade her. She was perfectly good-tempered and *insouciant*. She gave in to all his disorderly ways, and was indeed as easy about meals and hours as he was, dispensing with the one and forgetting the other; and so far the marriage was not such an absolute failure as, according to all human laws, it ought to have been.

However, as was natural, it raised a new imbroglio, and apparently cut off Shelley from all further personal intercourse with his family. The Shelleys have been wildly vituperated, as indeed have been all who have ventured to lift a hand against the poet—a doom which even the present writer does not hope to escape; but in reality it is very evident that their son had done everything a son could do to offend and wound them. He had brought a public stigma on his name; he had attempted to fill the mind of at least one of his sisters with his own wildly sceptical ideas; and now he had made the most glaring *mésalliance* on the very back of his other offences. Parental anger had not got time to cool when it was thus fanned into fiercest blaze again. We are never formally told, however, that Shelley's two hundred a-year was withdrawn from him; and it is certain that he managed to live somehow, to make continual changes and long journeys, amusements which are far from being inexpensive, during the three years which ensued. And what

years these were! Never Pixie of the wilds, never Will-o'-the-wisp, or the mischievous wanderer Puck himself, had a wilder, more fantastic existence. The strange trio—for Harriet's sister remained with them—went to York for a few weeks, to be near Hogg, then plunged suddenly off into Cumberland, to Keswick, where they made friends with Southey, and where Shelley commenced the correspondence with William Godwin, which was to influence so much his future life. In three months' time the eccentric party were off again from this seclusion, and this time, of all places in the world, it was Dublin they went to; and their object (of all objects in the world) was "to forward as much as we can Catholic Emancipation"! In pursuance of this, when he arrived in Dublin, Shelley published a pamphlet, 'An Address to the Irish People,' and also proposals for an association of philanthropists to regenerate the nation by intellectual and moral means. The first was cheaply printed, and written in language "wilfully vulgarised, in order to reduce the remarks it contains to the taste and comprehension of the Irish peasantry." Shelley himself is said to have distributed this pamphlet from the balcony of the house he lived in to the passers-by. He also appeared and spoke at one meeting, at least, where O'Connell and other notable persons were present. Perhaps that astute demagogue was not sorry to have the name of the son of an English member of Parliament in the list of his supporters at that early period. However, this wild and aimless crusade, undertaken heaven knows why, and ending in nothing, did not last long. They went to Ireland in the end of February, and by the 25th April we find the little family in Wales, from whence they took an-

other flight to Devonshire, returning in autumn to Wales again, but to a different spot. Their new residence was Tanyrallt in Carnarvonshire, and there occurred a mysterious accident, which Shelley either dreamt, invented, or really encountered, no one can tell which. All at once, from out of their solitude, frantic shrieks from the young husband and wife made themselves audible to all their friends. Some wretch in human form had attempted to assassinate Shelley! The ball of the assassin's pistol had penetrated the poet's nightgown, and with headlong terror the little party fled from the house and country, once more plunging across the Channel to Ireland. The next thing we hear of them is that they are mooning about Killarney, and enjoying themselves according to their fashion, after this astounding incident. No further inquiries, it appears, have thrown any light on this bewildering mystification, if mystification it was. Mr Hogg, it is evident, did not believe a word of it, and smiles at the breathless prayer for a little breathing-time and twenty pounds, to enable him to get over it, which the poet, still panting with his flight, makes to several of his friends. The whole story is tragically ridiculous, though it is evident that, whether false or true, Shelley believed in it, and attributed even some of the fluctuations of his own health to its results. This occurred in the beginning of March 1813. In April they were again in London, where, or in its neighbourhood, they continued until the next scene in the wild drama began.

It was, however, during this agitated and troublous period that Shelley's first poem, and that which perhaps—so obstinate is human feeling when once powerfully impressed—is most generally known at least

by name, 'Queen Mab,' was written. It seems so vain at this period to rediscuss a poem already over-discussed, and which is so very unlikely either to attract or influence the present generation, that we will confine ourselves to quoting Mr Rossetti's verdict on the subject, in which we substantially agree :—

"As to the poetical merits of 'Queen Mab,' I think the ordinary run of criticism is at fault. Some writers go to the ridiculous excess of speaking of it as not only a grand poem, but actually the masterpiece of its author; and even those who stop far short of this expatiate in loose talk about its splendid ideal passages, gorgeous elemental imagery, and the like. The fact is that 'Queen Mab' is a juvenile production in the fullest sense of the word—as nobody knew better than Shelley a few years afterwards; and furthermore, unless I am much mistaken, the most juvenile and unremarkable section of it is the ideal one. The part which has some considerable amount of promise, and even of positive merit at times, is the declamatory part—the passages of flexible and sonorous blank verse, in which Shelley boils over against kings or priests, or the present misery of the world of man, and in acclaiming augury of an era of regeneration. Those passages, with all their obvious literary crudities and imperfections, are, in their way, of real mark, and not easily to be overmatched by other poetic writing of that least readable sort, the didactic-declamatory."

There is one thing, however, which we may note here, and which is everywhere and at all times characteristic of Shelley: a curious twist which his mind seems to have taken from the first, like some growing thing warped and thwarted by a freak of nature. We have already remarked upon his deification of that secondary mental quality, resistance, and absolute incapacity to understand the much loftier sentiment of harmony, obedience, and subordination—qualities quite in-

dispensable to any lofty ideal. 'Queen Mab' reveals another tendency equally strange. No one, we believe, ever has glanced at this audacious production, without an involuntary sense of incongruity, a jar of something contradictory, which at the first moment it is difficult to give a reason for. On further examination, it will be seen that this involuntary jar arises from the extraordinary choice at once of the name and preliminary machinery of the poem. The name is already enshrined in the English soul. It is that of that tiniest empress,—

"In shape no bigger than an agate-stone
On the forefinger of an alderman"—

who drives over courtiers' knees and ladies' lips in her fairy chariot, daintiest and most fanciful of equipages. This tricksome sprite is the apparition that presents herself before us even now, despite of Shelley, when we read the name. We think of her "waggon-spokes made of long spinners' legs," the hood of her vehicle of the wings of grasshoppers, her whip of cricket-bone, her team of little atomies, innocentest and most fantastic of imaginations. Shelley, all-indifferent to the foregone fancy, imposes the delightful levity of this name upon his solemnly didactic fairy who is grand as a tragedy queen. Queen Mab, thus travestied, comes to the side of a sleeping maiden, lanthe, lovely and innocent, and carries off the soul, released for the moment from its beautiful covering. The fair spirit and the fairy queen go off together in a state chariot of a very different form from that original one. It is a "pearly and pellucid car," with "celestial coursers," endowed with "filmy pennons" and "reins of light." Such in its turgid grandeur is the machinery of the poem. And where do the voyagers go? To investigate the miseries of earth, the horrors of tyranny and

religion, the falsehood of revelation, the cruel fiction of Christianity! Never was a more strange contradiction to all poetic anticipations and all rules of art and nature. It is so wildly perverse that the ingenuous reader can scarcely believe it serious. But to the poet the idea of such a hideous panorama exhibited by a fairy to a pure mortal maiden has no incongruity in it. His mind fails to seize the subtle sense of inappropriateness. He is unable to escape from the ruling tendency of his own spirit into the nature of any other. The succession of tableaux which, after grave and long preparation, Milton permits Raphael to show to Adam, is utterly exceeded in horror and melancholy by the fierce scenes unfolded by Mab to Ianthe without any preparation or any purpose at all. The same curious want of perception recurs constantly in all Shelley's works; everything seems to have been twisted to him out of naturalness, out of harmony—his sweet bells are always jangled. He turns to darkness, and mystery, and despair, and horror wantonly, when all the sweeter secrets of nature are open to him; and without knowing, with the most curious obtuseness in the midst of his genius, unfolds all this horror and misery to us by the most unfit interpreters—by the intervention of a fairy, and the dreams of a sleeping girl.

We need not add anything about the opinions expressed in this poem. It is these only, thanks to the clamour of many good but foolish people, that have kept this audacious piece of juvenile braggadocio afloat. The ideal part of 'Queen Mab' is evidently founded on 'Thalaba,' which was, it is said, Shelley's favourite poem at this period, and would have perished long ago out of mortal ken but for the bold atheism of its second part and of the notes,

which the horror of the many has kept a certain life, or rather tradition of life, in. Had it not filled hosts of people who never read it with this visionary fright and hatred, 'Queen Mab' would, we do not doubt, have been dead and forgotten long ago.

In June of the year 1814, another new personage becomes visible in Shelley's wild story. His friend Hogg had gone with him to Godwin's shop, and into an inner room, where, however, the philosopher was not to be found. While the poet paced about in impatience, "the door was partially and softly opened. A thrilling voice called 'Shelley!'" A thrilling voice answered 'Mary!' and he darted out of the room." This is the first time that the second partner of Shelley's existence becomes apparent to us. In this same month were written some verses addressed to her, which breathe all the troublous passion of a soul perhaps still trembling and doubting what its next step was to be. That they had by this time betrayed their mutual love to each other is evident. According to Lady Shelley, this betrayal occurred in a very strange scene, in St Pancras' churchyard, by the grave of Mary Godwin's mother, the famous Mary Wolstoncraft, where the two had met, whether accidentally or not we are not told; but where Shelley, "in burning words, poured out the tale of his wild past—how he had suffered, how he had been misled, and how, if supported by her love, he hoped in future years to enrol his name with the wise and good who had done battle for their fellow-men, and been true, through all adverse storms, to the cause of humanity." This sentimental nonsense, which is very like Mary Shelley's own outpourings, and no doubt came from her, is very much less calculated to mollify and touch

the reader over the story of this strange transaction, than are the following tremulous verses, in which the reflection of a certain struggle and effort at self-restraint seems evident:—

"Upon my heart thy accents sweet
Of peace and pity fell like dew
On flowers half-dead; thy lips did meet
Mine tremblingly, thy dark eyes threw
Their soft persuasion on my brain,
Charming away its dream of pain.

We are not happy, sweet! our state
Is strange, and full of doubt and fear—
More need of words that ill abate.

Reserve or censure come not near
Our sacred friendship, lest there be
No solace left for thee or me.

Gentle and good and mild thou art,
Nor can I live if thou appear
Aught but thyself, or turn thy heart
Away from me, or stoop to wear
The mask of scorn, although it be
To hide the love thou feel'st for me."

This ominous poem indicates with sufficient distinctness what was coming; and about the middle of June Shelley left the cottage at Bracknell, where he had been living with his wife, and which for some time had been growing more and more uncongenial to him as a home, and went to London. He does not seem ever to have seen Harriet again, nor his child, the baby Ianthe, who had been born a short time before; but whether he deserted her cruelly, or separated from her politely and amicably, is a matter which between them the biographers have not yet decided. He did part from her, however, absolutely and for ever, and some six weeks after started for the Continent with his Mary, and began an altogether new period of his life. This event is treated with such philosophic calm by everybody concerned that it would be a kind of anachronism to pause and discuss it, as if it bore any relation to morals or the abstract standard of right and wrong. "Nought was done in hate, but all in honour." Harriet, if abandoned, was still thought of with perfect

friendliness, it would appear. Poor soul! she was not far off the birth of her second child! an aggravation of her position which no one seems to have taken into account; but it is to be hoped that the fact that "Mary also continued on amicable terms with her," was some consolation to the young mother not yet twenty. She went to Bath, to her father, while the other pair went off to Switzerland. On their return from their trip in autumn, Mr Rossetti informs us that Shelley "consulted a legal friend with a view to re-introducing Harriet into his household as a permanent inmate—it is to be presumed, strictly and solely as a friend of the connubial pair, Mary and himself; and it required some little cogency of demonstration on the part of the lawyer to convince the primeval intellect of Shelley" that this arrangement was an impracticable one. But notwithstanding these amiable intentions, the unfortunate young woman drowned herself a little more than two years after, and there was an end of her young life and of one portion of the poet's. It is said he was deeply affected by this occurrence; and we must hope it was true, though indeed no evidence is given from his own hand of any sort of penitence or sorrow either in prose or verse.

Shelley's life thus divides itself into two epochs, the reign of Harriet and that of Mary; the latter being, so far as poetry is concerned, much the richer of the two. Whether, however, this was Mary's influence, or merely the natural development of his mind, it would be difficult to say. He had scarcely reached man's estate even at the period when he formed this second connection, being but twenty-two years old, though for so many years he had had no guidance but that of his own perverse and most wayward will, and no code

but that of inclination. The newly-united pair went to Switzerland, as we have said; then returned, and—in consequence of the favourable change in his fortune produced by the death of Shelley's grandfather, which made him the immediate heir of a considerable entailed estate—they took a handsome house at Bishopgate, near Windsor, on the edge of the Great Park and Forest. Here they seem to have remained more than a year, and here the poem of 'Alastor' was written. While here they made an excursion on the Thames, in which it appears to us Shelley showed his usual perversity. They went *up* the river as far as Lechlade, almost as far as a boat could go, spending about a fortnight in the excursion; and with characteristic stubbornness struggling all the way against the current, instead of adopting the easier expedient generally preferred by aquatic persons, of *coming down* and floating with the stream. This, however, is a remark by the way; and it is more interesting to note a much stronger instance of poetic perverseness: which is the total absence of any influence either from the glorious Windsor woods or the Thames in the poem of 'Alastor.' There is a voyage—but it is a wild voyage, in which a boat unguided is driven "through the white ridges of the chafed sea." There is a river, but it is a "boiling torrent" flowing through a cavern, and making its way through crags which "closed around with black and jagged arms" (by the way, the boat in this case too continues its course *up* the stream); and there is a forest, but it has not the daylight breadth of English woods. From all the sweet nature around him he draws nothing, or next to nothing. His poet-hero roams wildly over the world in search of a lost ideal; but that world is exclusively a dream-world,

a wild composition of caves and rocks, of icy summits and putrid marshes, of tropical woods clothed with brilliant-flowered parasites, of grey precipices and rock-rooted solemn pines. There is a wild and melancholy cadence about the poem, and many beautiful lines; but the weird strangeness of every detail, and the absolute want of human features in the vague hero, make it hard to hold fast the strain, a peculiarity common to many of Shelley's works. "In 'Alastor,'" says Mr Rossetti, "we at last have the genuine, the immortal Shelley," and he designates the poem as "full-charged with meaning." This may be; but the meaning is one which most readers will strive in vain to grasp, and which, for our own part, we do not think worth the pains. Shelley, however, has certainly struck here the key-note of that melodious flow of word-music which is his undoubted possession.

In 1816 the pair went again to Switzerland, and met with Lord Byron, in whose constant company they seem to have lived for some time. This intercourse had results which would have made any other pair eschew the noble poet's society, but which do not seem to have affected the philosophic Shelleys. The story, however, belongs rather to Byron's life than to that of our present subject, whose own misdeemeanours are enough for him to carry. In Switzerland, Mrs Shelley (so-called) produced that extraordinary romance of 'Frankenstein,' which affected the mind of the time, as it must affect every individual reader, like a horrible nightmare. They then returned and settled for a time in Great Marlow on the Thames, and in the year 1818 finally left England for Italy. In the interval occurred Harriet's death; the marriage which legalised the tie between Shelley and Mary; the com-

position of the 'Revolt of Islam,' and the Chancery suit which deprived Shelley of the charge of Harriet's children, and which every man and woman who has yet written on the subject has denounced with more vehemence and heat, we think, than reason. According to all that we can glean from the various biographies, Shelley had never seen these children of his repudiated marriage, and he does not even mention them, so far as we are aware, with any kind of affection. They are mere names as they stand in all the multitudinous pages which rhapsodise over the misery of the "outraged father." The poor little boy had been born after the separation; and the impetuous poet, who had not even the patience to wait until this infant saw the light before he left its mother, cannot certainly be supposed to have had any warm paternal feeling for the child. And we cannot see, the question being once raised, how any judge could have decided differently. On one side was the grandfather Westbrook, who had maintained and sheltered the hapless babies, and had settled, we are told, £2000 upon them, securing their livelihood, and who was, it is to be supposed, a person of ordinary decency and morality; on the other, the father who had deserted them while one was still unborn, who had taken no notice of them up to this moment, who had lived for years in what the English law frankly calls (an ugly word, unpleasant to write) adultery, who had entertained from his youth, and still ostentatiously professed, sentiments not only contrary to all religion, but broadly opposed to everything which the majority of mankind considers morality. What could any Chancellor have done? Fortunately or unfortunately, genius does not counterbalance morals in the eyes of English law; and so far

as we can see, genius was Shelley's only claim upon the consideration of his country. To say that he did what most people think wrong, on principle, is, if you will, an excuse for himself personally to himself and a limited circle of congenial souls; but it is no excuse, rather an aggravation, to mankind, which depends for its very existence upon the maintenance of moral law. In short, it is extremely difficult to perceive what the ground is for that infinite indignation which, from Lady Shelley to Mr Rossetti, every biographer of the poet has expressed on this subject. Shelley's only possible claim upon his children was that lowest right of nature which is conferred by the simple fact that he was their father; and the man whose latest imagination had been that of a pair of lovers, born brother and sister, could not be supposed to attach much importance to that merely accidental circumstance. Had they been torn from his affectionate arms, taken out of his kindly house, even on account of his immorality, the complaints of his champions would have been reasonable. But when it is understood that he never saw them, did not know them, and had to all appearance expressed no interest whatever in them, we confess we are utterly bewildered to know what the commotion is about. "Logical minds, which accept 'saving faith' as a principle, are entitled, in the ratio of their logicity, to accept Lord Eldon's judgment as righteous," Mr Rossetti says, with a sneer. We are quite unable, however, to see what "saving faith" has to do with the subject; nor can we treat as anything but extravagant nonsense the wild talk about the "monstrous injustice" of this decree, the wickedness of the man who "robbed" the poet "of his offspring," or the crushing effect of this blow upon the young father,

who never, till this moment, had troubled himself in the smallest degree about his offspring. It seems to have been one of his wild fancies—gravely recorded in all these books, as if the poor child's illegitimacy had not made such a proceeding absolutely impossible—that Shelley feared some similar attempt to tear from him his baby son, the first child of Mary, and that this most fantastic and groundless fear hastened his final departure for Italy. The state of his health is also given as a reason for this; and as we have no longer the outspoken and candid guidance of Mr Hogg in respect to these particulars, we have no right to doubt what is said. Hogg is, however, very sceptical about Shelley's delicacy of health in the earlier portion of his career, and laughs at it with his usual somewhat coarse and patronising superiority, as a pretence always at hand to justify any new restlessness. This view of the subject seems to have been practically confirmed by the Italian physician Vacca, who recommended Shelley to give up medical help and to live quietly, as the best means of keeping himself in health—an advice not likely to have been given had there been anything of a serious character in his ailments.

However, whether it was for health, or for fear, or for the love of change, the family left Marlow, and went finally to Italy. The life in Marlow forms a pleasant episode in their restless existence. We think of the poet rowing up to the sweet shade of the Bischam woods, and allowing his boat to drift down under those pleasant shadows, among the tangled water-lilies, through lights and shades which are never more delicious than on a river—with a softened sentiment. His aspect is symbolical, and brings a sympathetic tenderness, half pity, half wondering sadness, into the specta-

tor's eyes. It is no man of independent soul and action upon whom we look as he glides in dreamy motion along the green and pleasant shore. Rather it is the fantastic little bark with a light in it, such as Hindoo girls send down the sacred river to divine their fate by. How long will it go on burning, that fitful earth-star? How long, chance and wind and the gentle currents favouring, will it float, till the inevitable moment comes, and the darkened water quenches its fateful glimmer? So does this wild soul float on, half-conscious, subject to every breath of capricious air and every unnoted eddy, with wild locks lifted by the breeze, and wild eyes that see nothing—eyes full of inward contemplation, unmoved by the sweet reality of nature round him, yet soothed by it, seeing not as men see. Probably the dullest gentle soul that has floated after him over those soft waters has carried away as much actual impression from them as Shelley did. Those wealthy murmurous woods, those silvery reaches, the sunshiny haze of supreme summer, the ripple of the soft water gurgling against his boat,—none of those enchanted sights or sounds find any echo in the poet's verse; but they lulled him while he dreamed of other things, to him more splendid:—

“The homely nurse does all she can
To make her foster-child, her inmate man,
Forget the splendour he has known,
And that celestial palace whence he
came.”

It is very difficult to take up for the purpose of criticism such a poem as the ‘Revolt of Islam.’ Its extreme length, its attenuated thread of story, its absence of human character, and even its bewildering melodiousness and beauty of diction, confuse the critical faculties. We are expected to learn a great deal from it; indeed Shelley himself

puts it upon a certain solemn footing: "Much of what the volume contains was written with the same feeling, as real, though not so prophetic," he says, "as the communications of a dying man;" but what it is that we are to learn it is extremely difficult to say, except that tyranny is hateful, and some other broad principles of a similar kind. The length of the poem, however, and its sweet monotony of music, baffle the attempts of any but a diligent reader. Indeed we should be disposed to say that no reader above twenty could at the present day give a sufficiently long strain of time and attention to master this word-sonata—this flood of linked sweetness and musical discord. The ordinary mass of humanity, for whom all truly great poems are written, will find in this one neither meaning nor feeling within their reach, though they may find many delightful lines and sweet cadences. It is as a piece of music only, that we feel ourselves capable of considering it; and music, as we are all aware, is by no means obliged to have any soul of articulate signification. It is amusing and comforting to ourselves to find that even Mr Rossetti shares our sense of confusion, and gets rid of this work in the fewest possible words, with vague and grand applauses, which do not mean much. We follow his example with a certain relief. Henceforward Shelley, growing into something like maturity, began to perceive that a meaning which could be grasped by the common mind was an advantage; and we may at once proceed to his two most notable poems, without following the rigid course of chronology.

The "Prometheus" seems to have been the first in time, as it is the greatest in power. It was written in Rome, chiefly in the gigantic

ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, in that sweet spring of Italy, which is the very spring-time of the poets, full of inspiration, amid all the wild new life of flowery vegetation, and the old stubborn grandeur of those unformed yet imperishable relics of the past. The scene was one which might have suited some old tale of Rome herself, in those days when she was mistress of the world. But Shelley's genius was not historical, and with a growing fascination he had been contemplating this vast subject, already limned upon his canvas for him by the great artists of Greece. It is, as we have already said, the very climax and highest point of his philosophy—the incarnation of heroic resistance, the highest human principle of which Shelley had any conception. It is impossible to deny to this wonderful production the title of a great poem. It is one of the most vivid pictures ever done in words—a ghostly, terrible tableau, illumined with pale lights which are not of this world, and surrounded by a vast colourless horizon, against which a few great figures rise awful in the majestic twilight—Prometheus himself in deathless suffering and courage, the solemn form of Earth, and the white spirits which stand about consoling or explaining. The music of his verse, which up to this time has been his great charm, becomes at once secondary when we are brought in face of this great spectacle. Hitherto we have listened, and sometimes found the sweetness cloying, and the melody monotonous. But here, once, and once only, a gift of another description evolves itself, and the poet draws his curtain proudly and bids us see. The first act, up to the moment when the Earth introduces her choristers to console the sufferer, is thoroughly fine and noble. The story is too well known to want re-telling. Pro-

metheus bound upon his rock, with a vulture gnawing his heart, defies the power of the tyrant god Jupiter; and, secure of the arrival of a time when his oppressor shall be hurled from his throne, waits with awful patience, enduring every torture till his deliverance comes. Nothing could well be more splendid of its kind than the opening scene.

PROMETHEUS.

Monarch of Gods and Demons, and all Spirits—
But One—who throng those bright and rolling worlds
Which thou and I alone of living things
Behold with sleepless eyes! regard this earth
Made multitudinous with thy slaves, whom thou
Requitest for knee-worship, prayer, and praise,
And toil, and hecatombs of broken hearts,
With fear and self-contempt and barren hope.
Whilst me, who am thy foe, eyeless in hate,
Hast thou made reign and triumph, to thy scorn,
O'er mine own misery and thy vain revenge.
Three thousand years of sleep-unsheltered hours,
And moments aye divided by keen pangs,
Till they seemed years, torture and solitude,
Scorn and despair,—these are mine empire:
More glorious far than that which thou surveyest
From thine unenvied throne, O mighty God!
Almighty, had I deigned to share the shame
Of thine ill tyranny, and hung not here
Nailed to this wall of eagle-baffling mountain,
Black, wintry, dead, unmeasured; without herb,
Insect, or beast, or shape or sound of life.
Ah me, alas! pain, pain ever, for ever!
No change, no pause, no hope! Yet I endure.
I ask the Earth, have not the mountains felt?
I ask yon Heaven, the all-beholding Sun,
Has it not seen? The Sea, in storm or calm,
Heaven's ever-changing shadow, spread below,

Have its deaf waves not heard my agony!
Ah me, alas! pain, pain ever, for ever!

The crawling glaciers pierce me with the spears
Of their moon-freezing crystals; the bright chains
Eat with their burning cold into my bones.
Heaven's winged hound polluting from thy lips
His beak in poison not his own, tears up
My heart; and shapeless sights come wandering by,
The ghastly people of the realm of dream,
Mocking me; and the earthquake-fiends are charged
To wrench the rivets from my quivering wounds
When the rocks split and close again behind:
While from their loud abysses howling throng
The genii of the storm, urging the rage
Of whirlwind, and afflict me with keen hail.
And yet to me welcome is day and night,
Whether one breaks the hoar-frost of the morn,
Or starry, dim, and slow, the other climbs
The leaden-coloured east; for then they lead
The wingless, crawling Hours, one among whom—
As some dark Priest hales the reluctant victim—
Shall drag thee, cruel king, to kiss the blood
From these pale feet, which then might trample thee,
If they disdained not such a prostrate slave.
Disdain! Ah, no! I pity thee. What ruin
Will hunt thee undefended through the wide Heaven!
How will thy soul, cloven to its depth with terror,
Gape like a hell within! I speak in grief,
Not exultation, for I hate no more,
As then ere misery made me wise. The course
Once breathed on thee I would recall.
Ye mountains,
Whose many-voiced echoes, through the mists
Of cataracts, flung the thunder of that spell!
Ye icy springs, stagnant with wrinkling frost,
Which vibrated to hear me, and then crept
Shuddering through India! Thou serene-est Air,

Through which the sun walks burning
without beams !
And ye swift whirlwinds, who on poised
wings
Hung mute and moveless o'er yon hushed
abyss,
As thunder, louder than your own, made
rock
The orb'd world ! If then my words had
power,
Though I am changed so that aught evil
wish
Is dead within ; although no memory be
Of what is hate—let them not lose it now !
What was that curse ! for ye all heard me
speak.

This wonderful reverie has an exaltation and grandeur in it worthy of the representative of humanity. The involuntary cry, " Ah me, alas ! pain ever, for ever ! " which bursts from his lips by times, as it were against his will, gives a reality to the suffering and the patience, and thrills the reader with that high pang of participation which is the loftiest form of sympathy. There is nothing in this of the pretentious and petty flurry of rebellion. The Divine Rebel is calm in the greatness of his passion and agony—calm, too, in his intense certainty of the change which is coming. The poet, no doubt, would have been deeply astonished had he been told that this attitude, of which he so fully feels the supreme grandeur, is the very attitude of that Faith against which he rails with so much fury. For, potent and subtle as his perceptions were, his range of vision was very limited, and more warped by prejudice than it is easy to express. But it is this deepening and widening of the sphere around him, this glimpse of the profounder spiritual emotions, which give power to his greatest conception. The following high colloquy between the Earth and her suffering son and representative is equally fine. He has asked to hear once more his own curse, and has been answered from the mountains and winds and

waters that none of them dare repeat those terrible words.

THE EARTH.

I am the Earth,
Thy mother ; she within whose stony
veins
To the last fibre of the loftiest tree,
Whose thin leaves trembled in the frozen
air,
Joy ran, as blood within a living frame,
When thou didst from her bosom, like a
cloud
Of glory arise, a spirit of keen joy !
And at thy voice her pining sons up-
lifted
Their prostrate brows from the polluting
dust,
And our Almighty Tyrant with fierce
dread
Grew pale—until his thunder chained
thee here.
Then—see those million worlds which
burn and roll
Around us—their inhabitants behold
My spher'd light wave in wide Heaven ;
the sea
Was lifted by strange tempests, and new
fire
From earthquake - rifted mountains of
bright snow,
Shook its portentous hair beneath heaven's
frown ;
Lightning and inundation vexed the
plains ;
Blue thistles bloomed in cities ; foodless
toads
Within voluptuous chambers panting
crawled ;
When Plague had fallen on man, and
beast, and worm,
And Famine ; and black blight on herb
and tree ;
And in the corn, and vines, and meadow-
grass,
Teemed ineradicable poisonous weeds,
Draining their growth, for my wan breast
was dry
With grief ; and the thin air, my breath,
was stained
With the contagion of a mother's hate
Breathed on her child's destroyer ; ay, I
heard
Thy curse, the which, if thou rememberest
not,
Yet my innumerable seas and streams,
Mountains, and caves, and winds, and
yon wide air,
And the inarticulate people of the dead,
Preserve, a treasured spell. We meditate
In secret joy and hope those dreadful
words,
But dare not speak them.

PROMETHEUS.

Venerable mother !

All else who live and suffer take from thee
Some comfort ; flowers, and fruits, and
happy sounds,
And love, though fleeting : these may not
be mine.
But mine own words, I pray, deny me
not.

THE EARTH.

They shall be told. Ere Babylon was
dust,
The Magnus Zoroaster, my dear child,
Met his own image walking in the garden.
That apparition, sole of men, he saw.
For know there are two worlds of life and
death :
One that which thou beholdest ; but the
other
Is underneath the grave, where do in-
habit
The shadows of all forms that think and
live
Till death unite them, and they part no
more ;
Dreams and the light imaginings of men,
And all that faith creates or love desires,
Terrible, strange, sublime and beauteous
shapes.
There thou art, and dost hang a writhing
shade,
'Mid whirlwind-peopled mountains ; all
the gods
Are there, and all the powers of nameless
worlds—
Vast, sceptred phantoms ; heroes, men,
and beasts ;
And Demogorgon, a tremendous gloom ;
And he, the supreme Tyrant, on his
throne
Of burning gold. Son, one of these shall
utter
The curse which all remember. Call at
will
Thine own ghost, or the ghost of Jupiter,
Hades or Typhon, or what mightier Gods
From all-prolific evil, since thy ruin
Have sprung, and trampled on my pro-
strate sons.
Ask, and they must reply : so the re-
venge
Of the Supreme may sweep through
vacant shades,
As rainy wind through the abandoned
gate
Of a fallen palace.

PROMETHEUS.

Mother, let not aught

Of that which may be evil pass again
My lips, or those of aught resembling me.
Phantom of Jupiter, arise, appear !

We confess that our interest in

the poem fails when we come to Asia and Panthea, and seek out Demogorgon on his ebon throne with his attendant Hours—just as our interest always fails when, after the intense strain of a tragedy, we are brought back into the more or less *banal* and wearisome ways by which everything is to be mended, and perpetual joy and content to be established in the earth. Neither Shelley nor any other poet can give interest to these vague glories or to the vain phantasmagoria of universal happiness, which always bears a fatal resemblance to a transformation-scene in a pantomime. The grandeur of the “Prometheus” is concentrated in the opening of the poem. It is a great tableau, as we have said, fixed against a pale gleaming sky, with weird songs breathing about it, and a host of shadowy undefined figures hovering around, but always the great victim in the centre of the scene, and the great consoler, patient as himself, the old majestic Earth-Mother, watching by him. “Ah me, alas ! pain ever, for ever ;” but no sinking of heart, no failure of courage, no change in the heroic patience and determination to endure to the end. How out of all his choruses and semi-choruses, out of his flowery and wordy Revolts of Islam, and all the sweet and petulant maunderings of his youth, Shelley should have dragged himself up to the height of this great conception, it is very difficult to tell. But that he did reach once to this sublime height, and had a glimpse, however brief, of something at once more profound and more lofty than had been hitherto dreamt of in his philosophy, is one of his truest titles to the great name of poet.

Of the drama of the “Cenci” we are disposed to form a very different opinion. We admit, however, that we express this with a certain trembling ; for even Mr Rossetti, in this

mild age, in a book published only a year ago, stigmatises one of its unfavourable critics as "a vile and loathsome ruffian," and another as a "vomit of creation," epithets which alarm a peaceable critic. And we are aware that a great number of "the best judges" are against us. Nevertheless, we cannot alter our opinion. Setting aside the subject and actual incident, which, to our thinking, are too horrible and revolting for the purposes of tragedy, it seems to us that the poet fails altogether in his conception of his Beatrice. What he intends is to make her an impersonation of maidenly nobleness, purity, fortitude, and strength; such a woman as would die sooner than meet dishonour, yet would endure almost all things for the fame of her house and the safety of those she loves. She is one of those whom pollution would kill, yet whom love would sustain and elevate to the last height of sacrifice. All this is expressed in the noble and spirited address she makes to the astonished company assembled to rejoice with him in honour of a great good fortune, to whom her horrible father has just announced, with much chuckling and self-congratulation, the death of his two sons. As they are dispersing in horror, Beatrice thus bursts forth:—

"I do entreat you, go not, noble guests;
What although tyranny and impious hate
Stand sheltered by a father's hoary hair?
What if 'tis he who clothed us in these
limbs
Who tortures them and triumphs? What
if we,
The desolate and dead, were his own flesh,
His children and his wife, whom he is
bound
To love and shelter? Shall we therefore
find
No refuge in this merciless wide world?
Oh, think what deep wrongs must have
blotted out
First love, then reverence in a child's
prone mind,

Till it thus vanquish shame and fear. Oh
think!
I have borne much, and kissed the sacred
hand
That crushed us to the earth, and thought
its stroke
Was, perhaps, some paternal chastise-
ment;
Have excused much; doubted; and when
no doubt
Remained, have sought by patience, love,
and tears
To soften him; and when this could not
be,
I have knelt down, through the long
sleepless nights,
And lifted up to God, the Father of all,
Passionate prayers: and when these were
not heard
I have still borne; until I meet you here,
Princes and kinsmen, at this hideous feast,
Given for my brothers' deaths. Two yet
remain—
His wife remains and I—whom, if you
save not,
You may soon share such merriment again
As fathers make over their children's
graves."

The girl who ventures to make this speech in her pitiless father's presence is strung to a high pitch of tragic determination before she makes such an appeal, and it is possible that the horror of the crowning outrage to which she is soon after subjected might have driven her mad for the moment. But even her madness ought to have been the madness of strength, and not the confused and hopeless babbling of weakness. Though the fact is continually kept before us that her wrong is too hideous to be told, she nevertheless indicates its nature with such distinctness to her former lover that mistake is scarcely possible—which is surely a poor reading of the distraught soul. After the outrage she consents to her father's murder, and even plans its circumstances, but rather from a desire to escape the future than from any tragic consciousness that the future had come to an end for her. The passionate sense that further life is impossible, which moved the Lucretia of an older

story, has no place in this pale Beatrice. No solemn priesthood of vengeance comes upon the outraged woman, as it might have done with the noblest effect and truth to nature. It may be said, indeed, on this point, that Shelley had the bonds of historical fact to restrain him; but fact and truth are two things, and a great dramatic poet could not be so bound by the actual. The Beatrice of the first act would have taken the guilt upon herself and saved her family; but Shelley's Beatrice is not equal to that great height. In the torture-scene her failure is still more apparent. All that she thinks of is escape: whereas any true conception of a lofty character so circumstanced would make the very thought of escape impossible. Every high sentiment requires that such a victim should seek and insist upon that death which is her only refuge. But Beatrice fights for life and deliverance to the very last. She is eloquent and casuistical, and all but wins her cause by her appeal to the feelings of Camillo, and by the still more striking appeal she makes to the terrors of the poor wretch Marzio the bravo, upon whom she imposes her lie with a splendid assurance, which is totally unlike our first conception of her character. The scene is fine, so far as the poetry is concerned.

"Beatrice.—O thou who tremblest on the giddy verge
Of life and death, pause ere thou answerest me;
So mayst thou answer God with less dismay.
What evil have we done thee? I, alas!
Have lived but on this earth a few sad years;
And so my lot was ordered that a father
First turned the moments of awakening life
To drops each poisoning youth's sweet hope; and then
Stabbed with one blow my everlasting soul,

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And my untainted fame, and even that peace
Which sleeps within the core of the heart's heart;
But the wound was not mortal; so my hate
Became the only worship I could lift
To our great Father, who in pity and love
Armed thee, as thou dost say, to cut him off;
And thus his wrong becomes my accusation!
And art thou the accuser? If thou hop'st Mercy in heaven, show justice upon earth: Worse than a bloody hand is a hard heart. If thou hast done murders, made thy life's path
Over the trampled laws of God and man, Rush not before thy Judge, and say, 'My Maker,
I have done this, and more; for there was one
Who was most pure and innocent on earth, And, because she endured what never any, Guilty or innocent, endured before, Because her wrongs could not be told nor thought,
Because thy hand at length did rescue her, I with my words killed her and all her kin.'
Think, I adjure thee, what it is to slay The reverence living in the minds of men Towards our ancient house and stainless fame!
Think what it is to strangle infant Pity, Cradled in the belief of guileless looks— Till it become a crime to suffer. Think What 'tis to blot with infamy and blood All that which shows like innocence, and is—
Hear me, great God!—I swear most innocent;
So that the world lose all discrimination Between the sly, fierce, wild regard of guilt,
And that which now compels thee to reply To what I ask; Am I, or am I not, A parricide?
Marzio.—Thou art not.
Judge.—What is this?
Marzio.—I here declare those whom I did accuse
Are innocent. 'Tis I alone am guilty.
Judge.—Drag him away to torments; let them be
Subtle and long drawn out, to tear the folds
Of the heart's inmost cell. Unbind him not
Till he confess.
Marzio.—Torture me as ye will:
A keener pain has wrung a higher truth From my last breath. She is most innocent.

Bloodhounds, not men, glut yourselves
 well with me !
 I will not give you that fine piece of nature
 To rend and ruin."

This special pleader, however false and eloquent, is not the ideal Beatrice. The callousness with which she sacrifices this poor wretch, and compels him to die with a lie on his lips, produces, on the whole, an effect totally different from that which the poet intended. And his failure is of the same character as was his success. It is the involuntary, perhaps unconscious, mingling of noble moral qualities with the immortal resistance of Prometheus which makes that figure sublime. It is the negation of moral qualities which brings Beatrice down from all the advantages of her tragic position. Her lie is a worse death-warrant than any signed by the Pope ; and we watch her exit from the world and the stage without any emotion, simply because the poet has chosen to prefer his old bigot-dogma of resistance at all hazards and at any cost, to the far higher principle of personal truth and honour. The failure is great in point of art, in our opinion ; it is a wilful throwing away of a very noble tragic opportunity ; and what perhaps affects the mind as deeply, there seems a certain treachery in it to the dead—treason to that piteous face, half child, half woman, to those pathetic eyes which have wept all the tears of which they are capable, and gaze at us for ever from Guido's canvas with that tearless appeal of exhaustion which rends the heart. Few faces are so well known in the world as that worn, sweet, tragic child-countenance of Beatrice. It is the poet who has done this sad soul the last and crowning wrong.

Space forbids us to discuss in detail all Shelley's important pro-

ductions. There is not one of them, perhaps, in which there is not something beautiful to be found ; but we turn with relief and delight from "Rosalind and Helen," "Julian and Maddalo," and other pretentious compositions, to those exquisite minor poems and scraps of verse which are above criticism, alike exquisite in music and perfect in sentiment. Fortunately, for one person who reads the "Cenci," there are a thousand to whom "The Skylark" is a pure and ever-fresh delight ; and perhaps the reputation of the poet might be more safely, sweetly, and purely founded upon so much of him as is to be found in Mr Palgrave's excellent collection, 'The Golden Treasury,' than in all the more ambitious volumes that bear his name. These lovely verses are above censure, and almost beyond criticism. They have all the beauty of music, with a still loftier intellectual charm added which is beyond the reach of music. The ear and the heart are touched alike with a soft rapture when it is thus the poet sings. All other considerations, all thought of his philosophies, or opinions, or faults, or weaknesses, float away from us at the first note of that ineffable wild sweetness. "The Skylark," "The Cloud" (which, however, is less perfect), a great part of "The Sensitive Plant," the "Lines written in Dejection," those among the Euganean Hills, and many more—some of which, like the wild-flowers and stars, have not even the distinction of a name—are the true charter of Shelley's immortality. By their means we can track the poet's path as we can track the course of an unseen brook by the greenness around it. These scattered blossoms map his wandering way, and endear to us, in spite of ourselves, the most wayward soul that ever carried a minstrel's harp across the world.

Shelley had great deficiencies. His imagination was not of a human order, and had little perception of the wealth of noble sentiment and passion which may dwell in human-kind. In this respect his vision was most limited. He recognised little more in human nature than a certain savage capacity for rebellion, and a wild passion of love—love which could be manifested but in one way—and does not seem to have had any eye for individual character, or the subtleties of personal difference. His two great qualities even are by no means necessarily human. The grand type of the one—Prometheus—is a demigod; and the utterly unrestrained luxuriance of the other seems better adapted for something either above or below humanity—the irresponsible Ariel or the equally irresponsible four-footed creatures of the woods and wilds—than for men and women. He has not left behind him one single conception of human character which it is worth the world's while to preserve; neither can we find amid his poems any real attempt to fathom the mysteries of nature, or put meaning into her darkness. He has one wild panacea for everything, and a vague yet incendiary creed by which to make the impossible actual; but his mind lacks even the conditions which make insight possible, his power of sympathy being restricted by the same incapacity which limits his understanding. Men are an inarticulate dull wonder to him. He does not comprehend them, nor does he wish to comprehend them. Nature is more near to his wild soul; but even with her it is not modest nature bounded by locality and reality, but a wild and gorgeous composition of tropical beauties and glowing colour and awful desolation—the features of many regions caught up and blurred together in

a splendid muddle, like one of Turner's weird pictures. But with all these lamentable wants, he has a wealth and lavish flow of melody which may well bewilder and intoxicate the reader. Never was poet so sweetly garrulous. There seems no stint or limit to the torrent of melodious lines which he is ever ready to pour forth, nor any reason why the delightful strain should ever come to an end. The most of it is pure music, undistracted and unbroken by any definite meaning. We glide along the starlight flood without effort, without note of time or progress. Flow on, thou shining river, is the only slumbrous sentiment of our admiration. From nothing we float on to nothing, lulled by an endless sweetness. This is, to our thinking, Shelley's great and chief distinction. Mr Rossetti, himself a poet, claims for him the position of "the greatest English poet since Milton, or possibly since Shakespeare," the "greatest Englishman of his time," and "one of the ultimate glories of our race and planet." We are incapable of comprehending even the grounds upon which this verdict is given. To us Shelley is a wandering voice, wildly sweet, with powers of utterance perhaps unequalled, certainly unsurpassed—but a voice without any message, a lovely thing astray, a messenger perhaps dropped into the wrong planet, endowed with the language and the emotions proper to Venus or Jupiter rather than to the homely Earth. Humanity is not in him or with him. He has the pity of a warm heart for its misery, and wild indignation for its wrongs, but no comprehension of it, nor sense of its many-sided variety. We can never divest ourselves of the feeling that he looks at it with curious, eager, but impotent eyes—how bright yet how impotent! from without. He, with all his strange and thick-com-

ing fancies and bewildering sweetness of song, is a spirit of another sphere. The flowers he understands, and the clouds, and the "blithe spirit" winging its way, singing and soaring, into the blue deep; but Man he knows not, and has no power to comprehend.

We need not linger upon the too well known conclusion of the poet's career. Probably, had he been permitted to choose, it was the end which would have pleased his fancy most; and though, to our own mind, a human grave even upon the seasands, under the sweet Italian sky, with that melodious sea marking its measured cadence at his feet, and incapable of rude intrusion upon the poet's rest, would have been better and sweeter than the theatrical folly of incremation, and the dark and gloomy stone under the old Roman walls where his heart of hearts reposes; yet probably Shelley himself would have thought otherwise. He enjoyed such happiness as was possible to him for some years in Italy—moving now here, now there, according to his habitual impulse of restlessness; and if even his Mary could not give him perfect bliss, neither could any one else have done it in her place. In the soft decaying calm of gentle Pisa, in the more exciting atmosphere of Rome, in noiseless Venice, which he loved, and in the brilliant sunshine of Naples, he wandered, ever wayward, making to himself romances within romances of which no one can tell whether they were false or true of lovelorn ladies following him far off, and imprisoned maidens whom he cherished with the love of his soul. These fancies, whether real or imaginary, were enough to cross his life with many clouds of deep

dejection and fantastic melancholy. But yet this wild spirit, so unearthly in its intellectual qualities, and with so strange a dream-life woven through the web, was to the end open as the day to all the charities of tenderness, and beloved to the extent of devotion by a closely-clinging circle of friends. With some of the most intimate of these he settled on the lovely bay of Spezzia, a scene as entrancing in its real beauty as any that ever could have dawned even on a poet's dream, for the scene which was to be his last. The boat in which he was lost was pronounced a "perfect plaything" by the companion who died with him—so little do we know what is before us.

Shelley was but entering the real maturity of manhood when he died. He had not completed his thirtieth year. What that maturity might have done for him, none can tell. His intellectual progress, however, had been so great during the last five years of his life, that were such a speculation reasonable, we might well have looked for an advance at once in true manhood and creative power which would have turned all comment into foolishness. But this development was never to come on earth. Whether the wandering soul has found out now the true planet to which he had his celestial credentials, and whether, lost on earth and wildered with constant straying after that destination which he could not recover, he has had better fortune on the other side of the great sea, is a more useless speculation still.

"O world! O life! O time!
On whose last steps I climb,
Trembling at that where I had stood before,
When will return the glory of your prime?
No more—oh, never more!"

FRENCH HOME LIFE.

NO. V. —MANNERS.

THIS is not a propitious moment to talk about French manners, for it is difficult to disassociate manners from character, and French character has not come out successfully from the bitter tests to which it has been subjected by the events of the last eighteen months. But, in considering the main features of home life in France, manners cannot be omitted: they occupy too important a place to allow us to pass them over: however delicate, however thorny be the task, it cannot be avoided. To postpone it would be useless; to attempt it now is rash, and perhaps even unfair. Still, rashness may be faced; while, with care and honesty, it is not impossible to guard against injustice. We may attain the latter end by extending our examination of the question over the last twenty years, instead of limiting it to actual facts: in that way we may reach an average on which we can more or less rely, and shall, at all events, avoid the exceptional arguments which a study of purely contemporaneous history might provoke. And yet, even then, we cannot ignore the fact that, as national manners are a result of national dispositions, as they are a national manifestation of national tendencies and thought, they must be regarded with some mistrust and some suspicion, if character—the source they spring from—should be found wanting in times of supreme trial. Whatever be our sympathies for France, whatever be our admiration of the great qualities of its people, whatever be our desire to believe that certain present aspects of their nature are but temporary, we cannot force ourselves not to see those

aspects; no bandage which friendship and goodwill can tie before our eyes can shut out the glare of their shortcomings now; no effort of affection, no allowance for special provocation, can blind us to the moral and political defects which the France of 1871 has wilfully exposed to the gaze of Europe, and consequently, in some degree at least, to the bearing of those defects on an appreciation of its manners.

It can scarcely be seriously urged that manners involve a purely social, surface question, and are unaffected by the deeper principles of action which guide nations as a whole: even the most frivolous of women would hesitate to define them as a merely external form; consciously or unconsciously they would own that the roots of manners lie far away below the outside habits of daily life; while all serious thinkers will acknowledge that they are an essential and individual property of races, and that they serve to indicate the various interior dispositions of those races just as form and colour constitute the apparent distinctive marks which characterise each organic and inorganic object round us. It is this great truth which renders it so difficult to discuss French manners at a moment such as this. And this is not the only obstacle in the way: prejudice and comparison with our own customs may lead us to one opinion; the seeming evidence of what we take to be facts and consequences may conduct us to another; personal preferences and attachments may incline us towards a third. In such a maze of contradictory elements, safety—if any there be—lies solely in a strict

pursuit of what looks like truth ; and even then, with all the exactness and all the prudence which it is possible to employ, we may get radically wrong in the result.

One consolation—though it is scarcely the right word to employ in such a case—is, that the French themselves are, just now, as incompetent as we are to determine their condition with certainty and precision. But we, at all events, have the advantage of impartiality. We seek no satisfaction in the dissection of their ways ; we have no pride to gratify, no faults to hide, no excuses to invoke ; the matter has no direct influence upon us. We have but one object, and that a fair one ; we want instruction, and we try to take it from the French, because they offer it to us in a shape which we do not find elsewhere. This motive may perhaps legitimise the rashness which was just now alluded to ; this end may perhaps excuse the effort to analyse French manners in the midst of the greatest crisis to which any modern nation has been exposed. It is, however, an attempt in which partial failure is almost certain, and in the realisation of which every assertion and every argument must be accompanied by the reservations and the restrictions which the nature and the position of the subject imperiously impose.

And it is the more essential to begin by these expressions of hesitation, because we cannot confine the discussion to any particular class of manners ; if it be undertaken at all, it must touch upon all which is most striking in what we see. We cannot restrict it to details of social intercourse, or to mere forms of courtesy and of worldly *convenances*. If we did so, we should fall into the very error against which we have been arguing, and should deprive the subject of nearly all its

teaching. The conduct of French people in society, or visits, or at balls, is but a small part of the question ; its real interest lies in the nature of their habitual attitude towards each other in the current relationship of life, in the product of that attitude on the nation as a whole, in the indications which it affords of the causes which bring it about. The study is perhaps less difficult than it at first appears, because the French are generally so demonstrative that they supply ample ground for observation, and do not hide away what we are looking for ; but it is far from easy, and can only be approached with the avowal that it will be incompletely made, especially within the limits of the few pages of an article.

The first great feature of French manners, the one which strikes newcomers most, is incontestably the form in which the influence of women is exerted. That influence is by no means universal in its action : at home it is very powerful, but, in this generation, it rarely reaches out of doors. Woman's reign is almost absolute within the four walls of a drawing-room, it is undisputed in family direction and in the management of children ; but the cases are rare indeed where it extends to public questions of any kind. The French woman is essentially a woman ; her objects are almost always feminine ; she does not seek to go beyond her sphere ; she understands her mission as one of duty in her house and of attraction towards the world ; she is generally very ignorant of politics and of all dry subjects, and shrinks from any active part in their discussion. Of course there are exceptions by the thousand, but the rule is that she voluntarily abstains from interference in outside topics, whatever be their gravity or their importance. She may have a vague opinion on such matters,

picked up from hearing men talk round her, but the bent of her nature leads her in other ways ; her tendency is towards things which satisfy her as a woman. It naturally follows that men do not give her what she does not seem to want. They consult her on matters of mutual interest, they ask for and often follow her advice in business ; but, in nine cases out of ten, no husband would allow his wife to tell him how to vote at an election, or what form of government to support. This distinction is infinitely more remarkable in France than any analogous condition would be in England, because of the existence there of several rivals to the throne, and of the consequent splitting up of the entire nation into adherents of each pretender. Yet even this exceptional position does not induce French women to become politicians. Some few of them of course are so, and fling themselves with ardour into the cause they have adopted ; but, fortunately for the tranquillity of their homes, the greater part of them have wisdom enough to comprehend that their real functions on the earth are of another kind. The exceptions are mainly found amongst Legitimists, who are small in number but resolute in conviction ; and Republicans, who, though fewer still, are infinitely more rabid.

This abdication of interference with the destinies of their country, this frank abandonment of questions which, in our present state of civilisation, are everywhere supposed, theoretically at all events, to be under the control of men, enable French women to acquire special force in the direction of those elements of life which pertain essentially to their sex. As a compensation for the restrictions which they accept on one side, they receive autocratic privileges on the other ; but they use those privileges gener-

ously and well, for the greater good of their generation. They do not attempt to avowedly work out intellectual or moral ends—their acknowledged aspirations seldom take that form ; but they do seek to soften and to gild—to govern by charm and by attraction—to win men to their firesides by the bribe of elegance, of gaiety, and refinement—to tempt them away from other tempters by the satisfaction of their higher tastes and of their better natures. Organised as society is now, women can scarcely find a more useful part than this to play ; it lies well within their means of action ; it is exactly suited to the habitual shape of their ambition ; it is the true *rôle* of a wife, a mother, and a lady.

Feeling thoroughly the nature and the object of the functions which she undertakes, the Frenchwoman applies her whole energies to their discharge. She knows that she is, above all, a civiliser, and she employs her utmost vigour, her full invention, to attain her end. She surrounds herself with every help which can contribute to the result she seeks ; she calls both truth and fiction to her aid. Stimulated by her vanity, lured on to new attempts by the recollection of past successes, she insensibly converts her drawing-room into a theatre in which she is the great actress. And who shall blame her ? Who shall presume to cast the first stone at her ? In what lies her sin ? Let us ask ourselves, honestly if we can, what the world needs from its women ; let us put aside our own fancies and our own habits for a moment ; let us forget our prejudices while we try to judge ; let us look at this case as the French themselves do. And, if there be any among us who can go further still, let them lift their measurement to the highest social use of women, and test them by the pleasure they

induce. We are not talking of pure duties here—we are not considering the abstract side of life; we are contemplating only its external aspects for the moment, though presently we will try to recognise what these aspects hide. No fair observer will accuse a French woman simply because she pleases: jealousy and envy may stoop to such an argument as that, but experience leads us to acknowledge that that very faculty is the most admirable which a woman can possess. Where the right of criticism comes in is in the examination of the means by which she pleases: there we have our full privilege of commentary. Those means are open to discussion by all Europe, on the one condition that we state them truly. And such a discussion is particularly in its place here; for the manners of a country offer no element more important than the composition of the measures which women employ in order to maintain their influence and hold their ground.

No one who has any knowledge of the form which modern life assumes will dispute the fact that, in all European countries, men go less and less into society, and seek their satisfactions more and more away from drawing-rooms. This is as true of England as it is of France; but French women struggle more resolutely than ours do against the growing danger. They see instinctively that if it goes on developing as it has done during the last twenty years, there will come, some day, a thorough dislocation of the bond which, until new temptations rose, held women and men together in the pursuit of mutual enjoyment. With the practical judgment which is one of their high merits, many of them have set to work to fight against outside competition. They have not contented themselves with lifting up their hands and mourning

over the decadence of men: pluckily, and with a will, they have accepted battle, and are carrying it on with all the weapons they can forge. Let us bear this well in mind during our examination of the nature of those weapons, and of the uses to which they are put; for, in such cases, it may not unreasonably be urged that the end justifies the means.

The word *coquetry* expresses exactly and insufficiently the attitude of the Frenchwoman at her fireside: there is as much of pure nature in it as there is of art; and, furthermore, the word *coquetry* needs interpretation. To most of us it conveys the idea of the direct pursuit of admiration or of love, and of the calculated handling of all the artifices which may seem to serve that object. That is the meaning we should find in dictionaries, and it is the right one to apply to the majority. But to those who have tunnelled through the *coquetry* of certain Frenchwomen, and have closely examined its geology, the word becomes susceptible of a far higher sense; for it then comes out that, in not unfrequent examples, it implies the defence of general rights and privileges, rather than the desire of personal successes. It is for this, in a considerable degree, that many Frenchwomen wilfully attract, that they persistently seek to charm. For them victory lies in winning men away from other allurements, in reconstituting what was once society, in reasserting the undisputed supremacy of their sex as the true source of joy. When this is the prize of the strife, the *coquetry* of Frenchwomen becomes impersonal; their blandishments are not intended to vanquish you for themselves, but to drag you to a system which they essentially represent, to a theory of which they are the incarnation. If we admit such a point

of view as this—and in many cases it is the right one—coquetry becomes a merit, seductive wiles assume the character of honest combat, insidious temptations acquire the aspect of justifiable homicide. It is not so always: the mass seek simply to draw homage to themselves, without caring one atom about the royalty of their sex. But for either category, especially for the latter, the position is surrounded by grave dangers. Frenchwomen are too often fingering two-edged swords, they are too often risking their fluttering wings against the flame they fan; and even if the heart remains unattacked, even if duty or pre-existing love should cover it with an impenetrable breastplate, vanity at all events has no defence, and takes naturally to itself the glory of every triumph gained, even if it be for the common cause. These perils are manifestly grave, but the consciousness of their existence sits lightly enough on natures which are accustomed to them. Frenchwomen do not admit that, at the best, their lives are often passed in narrow escapes: they are blinded by long habit. In one sense it is as well that this should be so, for they could not possibly attain the brilliant temerity which they exhibit if the neighbouring precipice were always before their eyes. As for vanity, most of them rather like it; they take it as a recompense for their labour, as a solace for their devotion to a cause; they have their own approval, and that comforts them. The same might be said of other women besides the French.

But where the real *femme du monde* is unrivalled outside France is in the admirable dexterity, the catlike grace, the consummate intelligence with which she wields her arms. Concentrated in her "manners" all the varied elements of her coquetry come out. Her

every bow is critically measured according to the person to whom it is addressed, and the effect which it is intended to produce. From the low, slow, sweeping curtesy with which, on a first introduction, she salutes a woman of high rank, through the long, delicately-graduated scale of forms of recognition, down to the familiar nod and extended hand with which, without rising from her sofa-corner, she greets her male friends, each movement implies a thought, each variation telegraphs a meaning, each shade suggests the nature of the reply which she expects. The way in which the proffered hand is held tells you unmistakably whether you ought to respectfully press it or to reverently kiss it; the fashion in which the head turns towards you as you come in, the quantity and the quality of the smile, say, as distinctly as if it were printed in large letters, "Tell me I am charming," or, "I don't care what you think," or anything between these two extremes. The underlying wish can be expressed, the secret object can be shown, the exact degree of permitted intimacy can be indicated—all by manner. In their mastery of this unfathomable science, Frenchwomen possess a power which scarcely any other than themselves can even comprehend. They well know the strength it gives them, and they mature it with the profoundest care. It would, however, be a great error to suppose that this power is all acquired—that it is nothing but a fruit of long-studied, well-developed coquetry: the better sort of Frenchwoman is born to it, it comes to her with her mother's milk, it is in her nature—all she does is to reinforce it by the arts and aids which experience successively places at her disposal. The rapid play of physiognomy, the trembling of the eyebrows and of the corners of the

mouth, the twisting of the shoulders, the nervous oratory of the fingers, the suggestive movements of the feet, all these forms of speech—for such they are—belong to her by right of birth; she does but regulate their expression. With such infinite and varied language at her disposal she is not obliged to open her lips to speak: ideas and sentiments and desires pour out of her without words; her manner is half her eloquence.

But they are not all like this. As with most other products, they have their categories, their classes, their degrees. Thus far we have looked only at the highest types, at the most perfected examples; below them stretch away vast areas of decreasing skill, of lessening charm, ending in the bottom strata, with the worst form of contrary development. Awkwardness, stupidity, and vulgarity can be found in France in tons: those unattractive attributes exist there in lamentable abundance; but it is a peculiarity of the country that they do not necessarily depend on rank, or even on education; they appear to be as instinctive in their victims as are the brilliant properties we have been roughly sketching in the luckier individuals who possess them. Manner can be to a great extent acquired: it may be copied, it may be struggled for, it may be put on as if it were a dress; but to be absolutely complete in its working out it must be innate in its origin. And yet, true as this may be, the French enjoy a singular facility, so proper to themselves that it may be regarded as a monopoly, which enables them to partially compensate for indigenous insufficiency. They have the faculty of imitation. To take one example which is familiar to us all, what can be more striking than the manners of the Paris shop-girls as a whole? It cannot surely be pre-

tended that they are all born with the tone they reach. Many of them must be so, for we see amongst them such admirable types that they can only be explained by indwelling tendencies and natural dispositions; but the greater part of them pick up, by nothing but contact and adaptation, the external characteristics which generally belong to their superiors. Of course they do not climb beyond conventionalities of mere form—they do not attain to the supreme subtleties which are found only on the topmost round of the high ladder which leads to perfection as it is understood in France; but they scramble to an altitude which suffices amply to enable them to please us; they show us what can be done by copying, and they seem thereby to prove that, amongst their countrywomen, absence of reasonably good manners should rather be attributed to a personal incapacity for appreciating them than to any absolute impossibility of acquiring them. This explanation, if it be a right one, would lead us to suppose that there may almost be a sort of preference for vulgarity in certain minds, and that its existence is a consequence of free election rather than of incurable deficiencies. However extravagant such a proposition may look at first, there is probably some truth in it; for, otherwise, it would be difficult to explain how it is that, with all the means of improvement which are at their disposal, there should be so many vulgar women in France, and especially, why they should carry their vulgarity to the prodigious pitch they often reach. It is possible that the very excessiveness of their national capacity in one direction provokes a violent recoil the other way if that capacity is not wisely guided; and that the same feline ways, the same ardent demonstrativeness, which aid a French

lady to compose her admirable manner, are distorted into exaggerated coarseness in cases where the sentiment of their right uses does not exist. This does not tell us, however, why that sentiment should be absent in some natures and present in others; but as we are not likely to be able to find any answer to such a question, we had better prudently leave it alone; it is beyond our ken.

Between those two extremes lie the average women of France. They are generally agreeable, sometimes rather *maniérées* and pretentious, sometimes very simple and unaffected, rarely shy or timid. A total self-possession, a calm indifference which looks as if it sprang from long experience of the world, but which, ordinarily, is produced solely by the habit of other people which they acquire in childhood, are their great features. They go in and out of a crowded room, they receive a dozen strangers, they talk, they laugh, with an appearance of unconsciousness which renders it difficult to suppose that they are coquetting; and yet a vast number of them are acting on a tiny scale, though without any special object beyond a vague desire to please. The necessity of attracting is in the Gallic blood: it may be controlled by the deep sentiment of one absorbing duty; it may be temporarily suppressed by other more urgent needs; it may be modified in its expression by the thousand accidents of position: but it is at the bottom of all Frenchwomen's hearts, though it comes out in so many varied forms that it is not always easy to recognise its presence. There is something which strangely influences men in the idea that almost every woman they meet wishes to make them like her; there is an unseen flattery in such a thought, but its action is none the less real be-

cause it is not evident to the eye. The woman, often half unconsciously, conveys to the man the notion that it would be agreeable to her to be made love to, partly as a pastime, partly as a homage which is due to her: the man knows, nineteen times out of twenty, that he will be forgotten directly his back is turned, and that some one else will take his place with identically the same result; but that certainty does not prevent his doing what is more or less expected from him during the quarter of an hour he is there. So the two go on, for no harm's sake at all, and a week afterwards one says that Monsieur X is an agreeable man, and the other that Madame Z is a charming woman. Within limits such as these—and in the immense majority of cases this is all which happens—the French system has great merits: it stimulates grace of language, it provokes expression, it brings out courtesy and good manners, and it offers a powerful antidote to the poisons which are working on most men's minds from the opposite direction.

The measures employed to attain these ends have been alluded to already in general terms; we will now try to specify some of them more exactly, so as to see as clearly as a few examples will permit, how French manners are composed. Here, however, we must cease to talk of women by themselves—we must look at men as well; for, though their side of the subject is less attractive, it makes up half the whole. And we must descend into certain trivial details, into trifling forms and habits, otherwise the sketch would give outline without shading. It may seem useless or absurd to gravely state that, at a dinner-party, the lady of the house is the first to leave the drawing-room and heads the procession to the table: but even in such a fact as that there

is a meaning; for it shows that, in French eyes, she is on her own ground, and therefore merits the homage which is due to every woman in her right place. The husband, on the contrary, comes last, because, as a man, his duty is to yield precedence to everybody he receives. When dinner is finished every one returns in the self-same order, arm in arm, the mistress and her cavalier first; the husband and his companion bring up the rear. And why do all come back at once straight into the drawing-room? Why is there no separation of the sexes, no division into male and female talk? Because the women will not have it; the men obey them, not unwillingly, indeed, but because they find it pleasanter. In many houses, especially in Paris, even the excuse of smoking is not allowed to divide the guests; cigars are lighted in the drawing-room—the very women offer matches, so determined are they that men shall not abandon them. And, after all, this is right in principle: the objection to tobacco is only personal; and whenever its smell is not insupportable to themselves, women show sound wisdom in suppressing the purely theoretical objection that a drawing-room is not a place to smoke in. But whatever be the concessions which she makes in order to fulfil her first duty of keeping society together, no Frenchwoman who respects herself will permit concessions to degenerate into liberty. No Frenchman will dream of showing less deference to the women round him, or of less strictly observing forms, because he is allowed to smoke in the company of diamonds and white dresses. In questions of this sort the French show remarkable tact. Impertinent and *entrepreneurs* (there is no English word for that) as they often are with women that they do

not know, they rarely attempt to profit by the familiarities which the modern system of life permits amongst people who meet on a footing of recognised equality. On both sides there is a sentiment of measure and propriety which is not often forgotten; the result is, that cigars authorise no licence, that natural *abandon* produces no disrespect. The material attitudes of the men prove this: there is no lolling about, no carelessness of position, no neglect of the observances which are habitually practised in the presence of women. And yet there is but little ceremony in our meaning of the word. The people do not sit straight, they do not forbid themselves to move, immobility is not supposed to be *comme il faut*—quite the contrary; there is a perpetual shifting of the body, especially of the arms and legs—a constant adaptation of physical action to the ideas which are being expressed—an unceasing working of the features. All this gives singular animation to French society, but it is all regulated by the unwritten code which fixes “manners.” The absence of self-imposed restraint creates a freedom of which we have no idea; but the presence of courtesies which no one would be permitted to neglect, maintains a politeness which we but rarely attain. Who ever saw a wooden Frenchwoman? She may sometimes be ungainly, but she is always thoroughly alive. Even her affectations do not become namby-pamby; the sentiment of vitality is all over her, it leaps out in everything she does; but with all her vehemence of movement she never forgets that she is a woman, and never fails to exact what is due to her as a woman.

There are, however, many details of life, or rather of customs, in which feminine action is not spe-

cially expressed. Such are, for instance, amongst others, the announcements of deaths and marriages. In these there is no distinction of the sexes. The circulars which are sent round to all acquaintances (newspaper advertisements are not employed in France for such ends as these) contain, in one case, the names of the father and mother, if they be alive, and in the other, those of all relations, to the third degree. A *billet de faire part*, as these documents are called, is couched in invariable language, whatever be the position of the senders. For a marriage it always says, in inverted duplicate—"Monsieur and Madame A. have the honour to inform you of the marriage of their son, M. Charles A., with Mademoiselle Julie B." And, in another sheet—"Monsieur and Madame B. have the honour to inform you of the marriage of their daughter, Mademoiselle Julie B., with M. Charles A." If you are invited to the wedding, the two printed notes contain the additional sentence—"and beg you to be present at the nuptial benediction, which will be given to them in such a church on such a day." For a funeral the shape is different; the *billet* is in this form: "You are begged to be present at the funeral-service and burial of M. N., who died on the 9th instant, at the age of fifty years, after receiving the sacraments of the Church, which will take place on the 11th instant, in the church of —, his parish, at eleven o'clock precisely. From M. A., Madame B.," and so on through twenty, thirty, or forty names, as the case may be, "his father, mother, wife, children, brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts, nephews, nieces, cousins, second cousins," and various other forms of connection. If it be a notification of the death, without an invitation

to the ceremony, then the wording is: "M. A., Madame B.," and all the others, "have the honour to inform you of the painful loss which they have sustained in the person of M. N., who died on the 11th instant," &c.; "their son, husband, father, brother," and so on. Births used to be notified in an analogous way, but the practice has died out during the last thirty years, and no notice is now given of the arrival of new children. Most people attend the weddings to which they are convoked; everybody goes to funerals; nothing is allowed to stand in the way of the latter duty, which is considered absolutely sacred, as being the last sign of sympathy you can offer. This is why French funerals present such long processions; why several hundred people may often be seen marching bare-headed behind a hearse, to church or to the cemetery. It is a touching custom, and everybody joins in momentarily with its object, by uncovering as the coffin passes. All these things, however unimportant in themselves, are signs not only of habit but of feeling. They show how much the French associate themselves, externally at least, with each other's joys and sorrows; how every opportunity of demonstration is seized upon and utilised; how the manners of the nation reflect the sentiments which guide it, or which, at least, are supposed to guide it.

The organisation of balls, visits, and receptions is materially the same in France as in other European countries; the form of invitations is the same, but answers to them are somewhat differently composed. The formula usually adopted in reply to an offered dinner is: "M. A. remercie Monsieur et Madame B. de leur gracieuse invitation, et aura l'honneur de s'y rendre." And here, lest the little detail should pass unobserved, it is

necessary to draw attention to the fact that A., in speaking of himself, writes "M.;" while in mentioning B. and his wife he says, "Monsieur et Madame," at full length. This distinction is invariably employed by men; it is a necessary courtesy. Women, on the contrary, always describe themselves as "Madame," without abbreviation. That is a woman's right; it indicates that her sex puts her in a position of superiority; that she has to receive honours, not to offer them.

One of the highest merits of the French system of manners is, that it tacitly lays down the principle that all persons meeting in the same house know each other without the formality of introduction. Any man may ask any girl to dance, or speak to anybody at a private party. This in no way extends to public gatherings, where the guarantee of supposed equality which results from the fact of knowing the same host does not exist. But in drawing-rooms the rule is absolute; everybody may talk to everybody. This is an intelligent and most practical custom; it facilitates conversation; it dispels all awkwardness towards your neighbour; it melts cold natures; it makes it possible to pass a pleasant hour in a house where you do not know a soul; it gives a look of warmth and unity to a room. No one is obliged to sit gloomily and in silence between two repelling strangers. If you want to speak you are sure of a listener. Of course people are often regularly introduced to each other by the master or the mistress, especially at dinner-parties; but in those cases the object is to put a name upon them, not to authorise them to converse; for that act no permission is required. The French have such a need of talk, and, generally, they talk so well, that it is easy to understand

how this rule grew up; but the explanation should not be limited to that one cause. Sociableness is quite as real a necessity for them as chatter is, and the first condition of its practice is that all needless barriers should be suppressed between persons of the same society; so, for this reason too, liberty of acquaintance has been adopted indoors. Its effect on manners, strictly so called, is to polish them still further; for, though you have the indisputable right to begin a conversation with a lady next to you whom you have never seen before, you can only do so on condition of employing all the most respectful shades of attitude and language: you cannot jump into intimacy with her, and can only profit by her presence provided you show yourself to be well worthy of it. Between men these obligations are naturally less strict, though they continue to exist in a great degree, and involve the use of courteous forms and of much more ceremony than is necessary between previous friends. The principle which temporarily equalises all the people who are united under the same roof has other applications besides this one. It is a consequence of the self-same theory which obliges men to raise their hats when they enter a railway carriage, or an omnibus, or a waiting-room, or a shop, or any covered place where they find other people. It is the same feeling which leads them to bow respectfully to every lady they may encounter upon a staircase; and if she does not return the courtesy, you may be sure from that single fact she is not a Frenchwoman. These acts, and others like them, are very civilising; they add much grace to life; they induce external consideration and respect for others; the style in which they are executed gives you an instantaneous and generally cor-

rect idea of the entire manners of the performer. This brings us to that infinitely grave question—a Frenchman's bow.

There are many theories on this deep subject; there have been many professors of the noble science of salutation; there are, even in these degenerate days, differences of opinion as to the exact nature and ordination of the movements which compose a bow; but the generally adopted practice of the best modern school is after this wise. When you meet a lady that you know, you begin, four yards off, by calmly raising your outside arm, right or left, as the case may be. There must be no precipitation in the movement, and the arm must be maintained at a certain distance from the body, with a sort of roundness in its curve and motion; that is, it must not come up too direct, and especially not too fast. When the hand arrives at the level of the hat rim, it must seize it lightly, slightly, with about half the length of the fingers; it must slowly lift the hat, and slowly carry it out in air to the fullest length of the gradually-extended straightened arm; but not in front, it must go out sideways, horizontally from the chest, and on a level with the shoulder; this part of the operation must last several seconds. Simultaneously the hat must be turned over, by a calculated gradual movement, in exact proportion with the progress of its passage through the atmosphere, so that, starting perpendicularly with the crown upwards, it may describe a complete semicircle on its road, and reach the extreme limit of its distance at the precise instant when it has become upside down, and the lining gazes at the skies. At the instant when the hat is lifted from the head, the body begins to slightly bend, the inflection being so organised that the full extent of curving

of the spine shall be attained concurrently with the greatest distance of the hat. A slight respectful smile is contemporaneously permitted to flicker furtively about the corners of the mouth. Then the hat comes slowly sweeping back again, its inward motion presenting the exact inverse of its outward journey; the back grows straight once more, the smile disappears, the hat resumes its accustomed place, the bow is over, the face grows grave, and you, the author of that noble act, murmur within yourself, "I think I did that rather well." But, if the lady should stop to speak to you (she alone can determine whether conversation shall take place out of doors), you remain bareheaded; the arm is slowly dropped till the now forgotten hat hangs vacantly against the knee; the back continues somewhat bent; and when the talk is over—when, with a half-curtsey and an inclination of the head, the lady trips away—the bending of the body becomes profound, the hat starts off once more to the full distance which the arm can cover, but at a rather lower altitude than before, it executes a majestic, radiating sweep through space, and then goes on to the hair, and all is over. Written description renders the whole process somewhat absurd, but the impression is very different when the act itself is contemplated. Modern manners offer scarcely any form of deference so grand, so thorough, so striking in its effect, as a really well-executed bow. English people are rarely able to judge it rightly, for their notions and practices on the subject take so different a form that the Frenchman seems to them to ridiculously exaggerate when he superbly waves his hat all round him; but, on the other hand, the British fashion of salute is miserable and contemptible

in Gallic eyes, and is, especially, utterly inexpressive of the courtesy and the homage which men ought to manifest towards women. In France the very boys know how to bow; and though the nation exhibits every sort of degree of capacity in the matter, from the highest to the lowest, the dogma that bowing is a really important function is believed in almost everywhere.

The children are generally well-mannered; they are seldom rough or boisterous; their almost constant contact with their mothers and their mothers' friends gives them, from their babyhood, a glimmering of the sort of voice and attitude which ought to be adopted before strangers. There are exceptions in any quantity; vulgar parents usually make vulgar offspring, but the mass of boys and girls—particularly the latter—are fairly well-behaved, and do not show loutishness or stupidity when spoken to. One of the great causes of the ease with which, as a whole, the French act towards each other, lies in this early training. A boy of ten knows perfectly that if his father meets a lady in the street, and stops to speak to her, his own duty is to take his hat off and to stand bareheaded. He knows that it would be rude to shake hands with anybody, man or woman, without uncovering; his mother tells him, his father sets him the example, so it seems quite natural to him; he does it simply, without *mauvaise honte*. In the same way he learns to be cool and self-collected even if anything occurs which draws attention to him in a crowd. If he drops his book at church and has to leave his place to pick it up, he does not blush—he sees no reason why he should. The girls do not giggle and look foolish if their hair comes down or their hat falls off; they rearrange themselves with perfect calm and self-possession, utterly unconscious

that any one is looking at them, and indifferent if they know it. From these early habits they grow up to regard all ordinary movements as being permissible in public. This is why a Frenchwoman takes off her bonnet and smooths her hair before the glass in a railway waiting-room or a restaurant, or regulates her skirts, or puts in order her baby's inmost clothes before fifty people. In her eyes all such things are so natural, so matter of course, that she has no kind of motive for making any fuss about them; she does them just as if she were at home,—and she is right. The advantage of being educated with views of this sort is immense; the views themselves are wise and practical, and their realisation has a marked effect on the development of simplicity and naturalness in manners.

As for the indoor tone of families—that is to say, the behaviour of their members towards each other—it is hardly necessary to say that it varies in France as it does everywhere else with their social position and with the quantity of affection which unites them. No law can be laid down in such a case, no general principle can apply to the infinite shades of conduct which exist amongst thirty-eight millions of people. As a rule, the love of home is universal amongst the French, and it provokes a good deal of harmony and relative gentleness; but that is all that can be said with truth. To pretend that, as an entire nation, they exhibit delicacy, courtesy, and politeness towards each other, in their intimate relations, would be an evident and needless exaggeration; but to recognise that the prevalence of warm attachment between persons of the same kin induces consideration for each other, and consequently softens the average of manners, is reasonable and just. The French are

essentially a loving race ; they are emotional and demonstrative : it would be therefore contrary to the probabilities which result from those two facts if they were found to be hard and harsh, or even negligent, in their home attitude. Their usual disposition is to seek to give pleasure, and they manifest the desire, wherever it exists, by tenderness of form, by exactness of attention, by mutual forbearance. There is much respect towards parents, much expansion towards old friends, much sympathy in joy and sorrow. The sterling old British theory that the French are "superficial" and "so insincere," is utterly false of their home life. Even as regards the ordinary relations of men and women, it would be difficult to show that they are less sincere than other nations round them ; but indoors you see them as they are, warm-hearted, affectionate, with all their feelings on the surface. So far anybody can look on and make an opinion for himself ; but where observation fails in nearly all of us is in small detail, in delicate distinctions, in subtleties which often are only recognisable after long contact, and, even more, after acquiring, by that contact, the power of just appreciation. Many of us are incapable of judging questions such as these, because we do not possess the faculty of perception ; others, more numerous still, need time and teaching to enable us to detect the finer shades of meaning which are conveyed by manners which are new to us. Their language is at first imperceptible and impalpable : by degrees it becomes distinct ; a habit of it forms itself within us ; it assumes a more and more attractive guise ; until at last, by long experience, we grow to like and cordially admire what, in the origin, we either could not see, or, if we saw it, disliked and disapproved. It would

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be folly to attempt to define, by verbal description, the thousand trifles which compose this element of manners ; it cannot be passed over without allusion, but no attempt to deal with it in writing could possibly succeed.

It is more easy to say that, as a rule, the French do not dress regularly for dinner as we do ; that pleasant habit is limited to a very few houses. Notwithstanding the great and sudden increase of wealth during the last twenty years, and the consequent large augmentation of the class which could dress if it chose to do so, the old system remains in force, little fitted as it is to the smart furniture and gilded walls of modern rooms. On that point we beat the French ; but they get ahead of us again in their constant and precise observance of courteous customs towards acquaintances. Every departing visitor is accompanied, if it be a woman, to the drawing-room door by the mistress, and to the outer door by the master or his son ; if it be a man, the lady of the house does not pursue him, but her husband does. No one is transferred to the care of servants, or abandoned to his own resources to find his way out as best he can. They offer us a good model, too, in deference towards old people, and especially in the form in which that deference is manifested. Again, they are far away our masters in the courtesies of language and in the infinite dexterity and readiness of their compliments. Their *esprit* is so full of *à propos* that they are rarely baffled by a difficulty ; they twist out of an uncertain position by a well-imagined phrase. This may be illustrated by an example. The old Duc de Doudeauville (better known in Charles X.'s time as Sosthène de la Rochefoucauld) was a type of the *grandes manières d'autrefois*. He was a superb speci-

men of a gentleman, and was looked upon as almost the last representative of the great school of manners which faded away with legitimate royalty. He was slowly coming down-stairs one afternoon from a visit, when he met a youngster of twenty, bounding up, three steps at a time, to the drawing-room which he had just quitted. Both stopped short. The Duke, by right of age, stood against the wall; the boy, four stairs below him, stood against the bannisters. Both bowed low, both were bareheaded, neither would pass the other. "*Je vous en prie, monsieur,*" said the Duke, waving his hat towards the first floor. "*Jamais, Monsieur le Duc,*" replied the other. So they might have stopped till now (this happened in 1855), if, after the fifth or sixth invitation from the old gentleman, the young one had not solved the difficulty by an inspiration. With a smile, and bending to his knees, he stepped up, saying, "*J'obéis, Monsieur le Duc; l'obéissance est le premier devoir de la jeunesse.*" That is what the French call "saving the honour of the flag;" but it is not everybody, even in France, who would have invented the solution. This story shows how close is the connection between manners and language, and how difficult it is to be complete in one without thorough command of the other. The best manners may be paralysed by want of words; there are positions from which they alone cannot extricate, and which need a ready tongue as well as graceful physical forms. This element of the subject must, however, be considered by itself, at another time; the influence of language is too large a question to be discussed incidentally.

The attitude of Frenchmen towards each other is a separate subject; it presents, on the whole, a different character from that assum-

ed by the women, or by society in its mixed nature. There is a good deal of the same varnish, of the same veneering, of the same external courtesies, especially between slight acquaintances; but, as the object is not the same, as the desire to please does not exist between men as it does between the sexes, it follows, naturally enough, that there is less reality, and consequently less sincerity. Here the old accusation of wilful sham which has been so often brought against French manners is well founded; for the men adopt in their mutual relations a series of forms apparently indicative of respect, of sympathy, of deference, while no such feelings, or anything approaching to them, are in their hearts. And though this same charge applies, in less degree, to other people than the French; though some sort of falseness is inevitable in that part of our conduct towards each other which we call manners; though, after all, no one is deceived by mere seeming signs, because every one is well aware that they cover no solid substance, these signs are so developed in France, they occupy so large a place there in the outside of life, they constitute so striking a feature of the national aspect, that the contradiction between what they look to be, and what we know they are, becomes particularly glaring. This contradiction assumes more importance still when it is measured by the moral results by which it is now surrounded. The considerations which were indicated at the commencement of this article assert themselves with special force when they are applied to men alone. In women we are tempted to excuse frivolity, and surface pleasantness, and the shallowness of ceremony. In them those insufficiencies are perhaps inherent to the part they play; and, furthermore, they atone

largely for them by charm, and by the solid service which they render in struggling, by every means, to hold society together. But for men none of these excuses can be invoked. Men represent other objects, other duties: men constitute the nation, in its public sense; and if we find the nation palpably demoralised—not only without principles or convictions, but almost without even opinions—we are justified in regarding men, in this question of manners, with a suspicion that we do not extend to women. If everything else in France stood on a solid basis, if religious faith were even general, if political convictions existed for other than individual purposes, if there were such a feeling as mutual respect, if we could perceive the great moral ties which hold a nation together, then it might be fairly urged that the sham of excessive courtesy between men is a valueless exception, and that the regular practice of public virtues and the recognised community of action for great ends take away all importance from it. But we see, or think we see, that, on the contrary, the sham of what we call exaggerated manners is but part of an entire system of unreality, in which professions almost everywhere supply the place of acts; in which duty, self-sacrifice, and earnestness are nearly undiscoverable qualities. This is why we are forced to ask ourselves, unwillingly enough, if there be not absolute harm in what we might otherwise regard as only an attractive weakness; this is why the manners of the men of France may possibly deserve to be classed amongst their national defects.

This, however, is such delicate ground, the faculty of appreciating its nature and its dangers varies so widely with the accidents of position and of personal prejudice and ex-

perience, that it cannot be approached without excessive precautions, or without reserving for everybody the fullest right of difference of view. It is but an opinion—one opinion—that can be expressed here: that opinion may be totally incorrect, but circumstances unhappily seem to justify it. And yet one shrinks from the assertion that a system which contains so much that is winning and pleasant, so much that seems to soften and unite, is really, after all, nothing but rottenness, as so many other French theories have proved themselves to be. If nearly everything had not broken down during the last two years, it would have been easy to defend the ostensible deceits which make up so much of our neighbours' manners. Until 1870, the subject was one of those of which it may be urged that "*la forme couvre le fond*;" but, with all goodwill and sympathy, that cannot now be said. Absence of convictions seems to be so essential an element of French character to-day, that manners take their place with all the rest, and come in for their share of the mistrust with which we cannot help regarding the entire moral condition of the country. Viewed in this light, the question loses its special nature—it becomes one of the elements of the whole position, and should be measured by the same rules as we apply to other and graver questions. Where all, or nearly all, is failure—where national action has sunk below the standard which we find elsewhere, and which, allowing for variations of shape and detail, we thought we had thus far found in France itself—the manners of the men cannot be abstracted from the mass; we are forced to take them as one of the external signs of an inner state, not as the special manifestation of pure courtesies. If what has been already said about the

closeness of the tie between character and manners is really true—and it is difficult to see how the argument can be disputed—the value of manners necessarily falls with that of character; we cease to be able to consider manners as a distinct and separate subject, depending on itself alone. The women we can put aside; they have their uses and their purpose: we can also admit and approve the studied deferences which the men generally show towards women, for it may be taken as the evidence of justifiable and even necessary or useful homage: it is when we look at the men alone that the difficulty stands out in all its force. When men, after bowing to the ground, and employing all the delicacies of speech and compliment, all the flatteries of form, abuse each other directly they have parted, they can scarcely expect lookers-on to regard them or their manners with much confidence now that their other public doings partake of the same illogical unreality. It is almost refreshing to observe—and the fact should be insisted on as a hopeful sign—that in certain cases, simplicity, naturalness, and even a shade of roughness, are coming into use, as if the better class of minds no longer consent to go on shamming. Ceremony is still the rule, the almost universal rule, but exceptions are creeping out; and without defending for one instant the adoption of indifference or coldness, or the complete abandonment of the elaborate forms which once constituted great manners, it may at all events be suggested that the particular position of France at this moment does authorise, amongst the men, a lessening of the practice of general deceptions towards each other.

The whole moral interest of the matter lies in this part of it. Even if the manners of the women are

open to some criticism, from the higher points of view, at all events it may be urged that they are not really more illusory than they are elsewhere, and that any blame which they may deserve is merited about equally in other countries. But excessive courtesies between men who neither like nor respect each other are, in this generation, peculiar to France, and it is difficult to invent an argument in their defence. Why are such courtesies put on? What are they intended to express? What real meaning do they hide? Of course it may be said, and with much truth, that such exaggerations are not universal; but it cannot be denied that they constitute the ordinary rule amongst educated persons, and that foreigners have the right to look at them as constituting a normal habit amongst the better classes. That being so, do we go too far in thinking, that the sooner the better classes abandon mere forms, which may now be classed amongst other useless deceptions, the sooner will they begin, so far as this particular evidence of their character is concerned, to grow towards reality and principle? There was a time when mere forms were a necessary element of polished education; but the entire organisation of society has become so changed, that no argument of necessity can be invoked in our time. People are now free to be what they are like; there are still abundant laws which regulate the conditions of our contact with each other; but as those laws are everywhere drifting towards naturalness and simplicity, the maintenance of meaningless ceremony can no longer be defended. And yet it can scarcely be expected that a manifest change of manners will be one of the consequences produced by the recent disasters of France. If those disasters had

brought about results in other and graver questions, we might speculate on the effects which they might be expected to induce in this comparatively trifling detail of pure forms. But as, so far as we can see, France has "forgotten nothing and learnt nothing" since the summer of 1870, it would be absurd to suppose that any real change will arise in the external fashions of its men.

For the women we can scarcely wish for change. When we know them well, when we have grown to them by habit, we cease to feel, or even to perceive, the peculiarities which strike us at first sight; we forget our prejudices, we accept the exaggerations which shocked us when we were new-comers. It is then, and only then, that we can fairly judge or accurately compare; it is then that we become able to appreciate that intensely French thing—"charm;" it is then that we can measure the degrees and sorts of pleasure which the manners of the higher types of French women are capable of provoking. The political condition of a country, however bad it may be, cannot be urged as a motive for the abandonment of graceful courtesies between men and women, or as an argument against the arms which some French women employ with such singular dexterity. But as against the men alone the situation may be differently viewed: there we may appeal to all our old theories of frankness, sincerity, and honesty, and may, not unfairly, urge that amongst the elements of the moral renovation of which France has so much need, the manners of the men will gain by a return to truth.

Viewing the subject as a whole, and renewing the reservations which have already been expressed, it is evident that there is a marked contradiction between French manners and the moral state which the grace and courtesy of these manners, if they were real, would necessarily imply. But this is in no way a modern fact. Those manners, since they first were formed, have co-existed with the moral defects which we observe to-day; there has been no change in either; French character, French qualities, French shortcomings, have been the same for centuries. Recent events have brought them into vivid light, but those events have not created them. History shows us, if we look at it with that object, that the race has been what it is since Louis Treize was king. The absence of correlation between the inner state and its outward manifestations has existed since manners were invented; there has always been the same polish on the surface, the same absence of convictions underneath. This generation inherited the contradiction, and has perpetuated it; the blame which it deserves is limited to that. It found itself in presence of a tradition—a winning, softening tradition—whose entire aspect was agreeable, which was handed onwards by its ancestors as one of the prides of France; it took it, and it kept it, without asking whether it expressed the truth. The question now lies between reality and charm; old habits and old preferences are so strong that charm will probably retain its place, for the whole race must change its nature before it will own that reality is a higher merit still.

A TRUE REFORMER.—PART II.

CHAPTER V.—I PRESS MY ADVANTAGES.

By the end of the week the next English mail came in, and my state of expectation for further news was turned into grave anxiety when it brought not the promised letter from Mr Paterson. I did not know then that he was the most indolent of lawyers, or I should have been less uneasy at his silence; but it was the more inconvenient to receive no confirmation of the first tidings of my fortune, in that it was necessary to settle the arrangements for an early marriage without more loss of time. So far nothing had been said on this point, but I could see that Mrs Barton had tacitly embraced the idea that the wedding would take place in the cold season at Toghluabad, four or five months hence. This had been the practice on previous occasions; for, as Barton would not come to the hills, and the exigencies of domestic etiquette required that he should give away the bride, none other was feasible, since fortunately the idea of an engagement running over the year was not likely to occur to either parent, such long probations being quite beyond the range of their experience.

When I first broached the subject to Eva herself, I think she hardly took in the idea. To be engaged was apparently a great happiness, now that she had overcome the first timidity and strangeness of her position; she enjoyed, too, the sense of my presence about the place for the greater part of the day, and our little confidences after lunch, when all visitors left, and we had the drawing-room all to ourselves, for Mrs Barton always retired during the afternoon to write letters to her numerous correspondents all over

India. At such times, when we had said all that we had to say, which was not often, there was music, besides the dancing-lessons before mentioned, to fall back upon. Eva played waltzes and a variety of little pieces, *pensées, souvenirs, échos*, and so forth, with a touch and taste which not even her country music-master had been able to spoil; and English songs—songs by Claribel, Gabriel, ballads by M. N. with words by P. Q., &c. &c.—sung by her appeared almost to have some melody, and which so sung, with pretty timid glances cast back at the listener, I thought I should never tire of hearing. Then when the sun got low we mounted our horses and rode round the crest of the mountain, or strolled down to the woody glades of Vallombrosa; while invitations to any evening entertainments included, as a matter of course, the whole of our little party. Thus in these few days we saw more of each other than in all our previous acquaintance. Can I say that we had come to know each other better? The first shyness was wearing off, and Eva would now venture to express her love in a hundred pretty little ways, and I think was perfectly happy; while it was a true delight to find, as I came to know her more fully, that her open unaffected manner truly reflected the guileless innocence of her mind, and that the slight archness of bearing, which gave an additional charm to every movement, covered no coquetry of disposition. My love wore her character openly, and there were no reserves, no faults of taste or feeling below the surface to jar the senses on their discovery.

But yet, can I say that we were really intimate?—that I had found the opportunity for confiding my aspirations and projects—wise or foolish—for the future to a congenial mind? I fear, had Eva known how occupied I often was with other matters—how I felt myself even grudging the time so pleasantly spent, although thoroughly angry with myself all the while for entertaining such a feeling—how eager I was for what I found myself against my will regarding as a mere interlude to be finished, and the way cleared for the serious business of life—she would have thought me wanting in the proper intensity of devotion to the claims of an engagement in its early days. At any rate, seeing that revelations of this sort would not be received with the needful interest, I put off making them till a more convenient season; nor did I open a book, or occupy myself with aught but love-making, even to the extent of reading the English papers. May I venture to confess that, like other pursuits which people follow because they are conventional, these few days were just a little fatiguing?

The announcement that private affairs involved our starting for England very soon, did not, I say, evolve any expression of interest on Eva's part to share my confidence as to the nature of the business in question. Business of any kind was beyond the range of her simple ideas, while even the prospect of reaching home in time for the London season failed to excite the enthusiasm which I had expected. Eva's experience of England was limited to life with her two maiden aunts in a small country town; after which, the delights of a season of Sirmoori, with its endless round of picnics, croquet, and balls, seemed to comprise all that could be desired in the way of excitement: and even the more sub-

dued dissipation of a cold season at Toghluhabad, where the military invariably gave a ball to the citizens, and the latter returned the compliment, to say nothing of her mamma's little dancing-parties, and at least a couple of picnics at Mogul Bey's mausoleum, had seemed like a new revelation of life. But when I broached the subject to Mrs Barton, the announcement gave her quite a shock. No mother could part more resignedly with her daughters, unaffectedly fond of them though she was, or keep on better terms with her sons-in-law, a still more difficult matter. But then marriage was a thing to be undertaken decently and in order, and how were these conditions to be obtained if no time were allowed for preparation? Not that the need was deemed to extend to the gentleman's arrangements. When Sophy married young Morris of the native infantry, flinging herself away as the infatuated girl did on that penniless subaltern, all the preparation Morris made was to turn away the chum who shared his little bungalow, and to have his old buggy done up by Meeta Lall, the native coach-builder. The officers of his regiment—Morris being a general favourite—subscribed to buy the young couple a set of crockery, and a plated tea and coffee service (got up by banghees from James Uncle & Co., the well-known Calcutta firm, at not more than two hundred per cent in advance of the English price), and the Bartons supplied all the household linen, so that the young couple were set up at once in all things needful; for as to furniture, the regiment was down in the relief to march for the Maghada frontier next cold season, and, as Mrs Barton truly observed, it would be absurd for a married subaltern to lug about a number of cart-loads of wardrobes and tables during the brief season between the wedding

and the march; so the young couple lived camp fashion, and did not furnish. Then again, when Fanny married Martin, the collector of the same station, everything was ready provided, for he had never sold off after his poor first wife's death the previous year, and he had one of the best-furnished houses in the place, with a Europe barouche, and one of Ditch's new palki-gharrees; and after the wedding, Fanny simply crossed over to her new home, and sat down to the late Mrs Martin's neat walnut-wood writing-table (a wedding-present to that unfortunate lady) to despatch her wedding-cards, while the happy bridegroom no doubt stood behind and drew comparisons between the former and present employers of that serviceable piece of furniture, much to his own gratulation, for the first Mrs Martin was not very good-looking, and was reputed to have a temper of her own. But my proposal conflicted altogether against Mrs Barton's sense of propriety, for there would not be time even to get a wedding-dress from England, nor could Eva's sisters be present if we did not wait till the cold season; besides, she could not, of course, be married without papa being present, and he certainly would not be prevailed on to come up to Sirmoori: there was clearly nothing for it but to wait till the cold weather, when we could all go down to the plains. All this and more poor Mrs Barton urged in favour of delay, and I could only reply that private affairs demanded my immediate departure. The proposal, half hinted, that the marriage should be deferred till after I had disposed of my business, and could return to claim Eva, was at once given up on the announcement that it might occupy even two or three years; for, fond as Mrs Barton was of her daughters, the notion that one of them should remain for an

indefinite period under the paternal roof after she was as good as married, was quite opposed to her ideas of the proper course of things. So she was now at last driven into a corner, and obliged to admit that there was no alternative to a speedy wedding; and as soon as this conclusion was come to, the final obstacle of Joe's absence was happily got over. A letter I sent him had not much effect; but in the mean time Mrs Barton had written privately to the doctor of the station to enlist his aid in the matter; and our accomplice, taking advantage of the effect of a slight attack of fever which opportunely came to our aid, so effectually frightened her husband about staying in the plains, that a few days afterwards we received the announcement that he had determined to take a couple of months' leave, and would start as soon as he had packed up his things, or, in other words, as soon as he could screw himself up to the unwonted effort. Immediately on receipt of this intelligence, Mrs Barton wrote to her only sister to Calcutta, wife of a civilian who was in the Board of Revenue, to send up forthwith the garments necessary for constituting, according to received custom, a reputable marriage. Her own wish would have been, although a better-dressed girl than Eva was not to be seen in Sirmoori, to order her a complete new outfit, without which none of her daughters had ever been married before—even Sophy, when she supplanted Morris's chum in the subaltern's bungalow, having entered that modest tenement with a *trousseau* fit for the bride of a Sud-dur judge; but to await all these preparations might obviously have delayed the event, and I succeeded in overcoming her scruples by arguing that it would in this case be surely much better for Eva to get what she wanted in England in the

latest fashion. So the order in Calcutta was limited to a wedding-dress only, with a few *et ceteras*; but to lose the opportunity of buying clothes was beyond Mrs Barton's power, and the local tradespeople benefited by her abstention. The sedan of a certain Mrs Jones—who had been lady's-maid to a former Lord High Commissioner's wife, and having married a drunken clerk in one of the public offices, was soon thrown back on the millinery resources of her days of spinsterhood for a living—seemed permanently to block up the entrance to the door; while half-a-dozen hired men-tailors sat squatting daily in the veranda, engaged on various mysterious articles of apparel.

But although I had successfully carried my point, a certain coolness arose on Mrs Barton's part towards me, partly that I was going to carry off her daughter so quickly, although I think she would not have minded the rapidity with which matrimony was to follow courtship if both had come later in the season. As it was, I disturbed a pleasant sort of life; for I doubt if she had ever more enjoyed a season in the hills than the time which followed the first preliminaries of the engagement: the mystery and the excitement; the congratulation and receiving and issuing of notes which took place; last, but not least, the pleasure of securing a new listener always at hand. I was a capital hand at listening, if not great at talking, and the good lady took advantage of the opportunity to the full. Before I had been a week about the house, I felt that I knew all the little weaknesses of my future brothers-in-law a good deal better than if I had been brought up with them all my life. Abbott's reserve, Garrett's harshness to the natives, Finch's narrowness about money matters, Morris's improvi-

dence, Martin's queer temper,—all these little foibles were dwelt on with a minuteness and circumstantial diffuseness which made me very sensible how accurately my own weak points would be portrayed for their edification in turn by this acute if kind-hearted observer. Joe's delinquencies, however, were the favourite topic; how he allowed the policy of assurance to lapse by neglecting to pay his premiums; how she could never get him to dine out anywhere; how when the Lieutenant-Governor came to Toghluhabad he stopped away altogether from the ball given by the residents to that exalted functionary; how he had not written to his sisters for twenty years; how (as before mentioned) Mary's coming out from England had been delayed for a season, because he would not remit the passage-money in time; how, finally, he lost the opium agency at Ahfinghur, which would have given him five hundred rupees a-month more than he drew now, and an upper-storied house with the best drawing-room in India, rent-free, because he put off writing to accept the offer. All this and more had been poured into my receptive ears during the trio lunches and dinners that took place in the first days of our engagement, or while Eva was getting ready for riding or for an evening party, till I felt perfectly qualified to write the family biography; while I could not avoid reflecting that it was fortunate my father-in-law's lot had been cast in the civil service, for that he certainly would never have been able to earn his livelihood in any other calling. His wife would now lose her patient listener, and generally her scheme of life for the season was upset, and this caused some slight resentment, although no woman could live less by method or think less of her individual comfort than Mrs Barton; but the main griev-

ance was clearly my silence as to the nature of my private affairs; and although she abstained from asking direct questions, I could see that her unsatisfied curiosity occasioned more real disquietude than the prospect of parting with her daughter; hence a sort of estrangement replaced the cordiality with which I had first been received.

In one respect, however, my silence yielded its own gratification, for I felt sure that a great part of the lengthy letters posted daily to one or other of the married daughters was occupied with surmises and conjectures as to the nature of my English business. One thing, at any rate, she did not suspect. That a person, least of all a son-in-law expectant, should come into a fortune and say nothing about it, was quite beyond the limits of her experience.

At first it was feared that none of the married sisters would be able to come up to the wedding. Harriet (Mrs Finch) wrote that her husband said his health was so delicate he might be ordered off to England at any moment, and did not want her to be absent at such a time—the true reason being, Mrs Barton declared, that he was too stingy to pay her dawk. Sophy would have come gladly, and her husband too, notwithstanding the tremendous journey from the Maghada frontier, but for certain interesting reasons which rendered travelling just then impracticable. A similar cause prevented Fanny (Mrs Martin) from coming up. But Mary (Mrs Abbott), the eldest sister, although averse to parting from her husband, determined that the importance of the occasion demanded her presence, and resolved to make the long journey from Mahrattapoor for the purpose; while Emma, whose husband (Mr Garrett) was on the railway near Timoorgunj, took the opportunity to

give her children the change to the Hills they stood so much in need of. These additions to the family involved considerable alterations in the distribution of the household, and commensurate squeezing of the inmates, for Mrs Barton's house, like most of those at Sirmoori, was a mere cottage on one floor. The second bedroom, hitherto occupied by Eva, was appropriated to Emma and three of her children. Mary (Mrs Abbott) was to have the spare one, not generally used. Eva was transferred to a small place, not much larger than a cupboard, taken off the back veranda, with about nine inches of space between the window and the cliff against which the house was built. A similar hole was fitted up with a hired bed for the two elder children; while another corner of the veranda was separated off by matting into a temporary dressing-room for Mr Barton. These arrangements made, and the occupants in possession of their rooms, the appearance of the house, hitherto so neat and well-ordered, underwent a considerable change. Mr Barton was the first to arrive, himself coming up the hill in one sedan, his bearer and a quantity of ice and soda-water in another; then came Mrs Abbott; then Emma and her children, with three ayahs, two bearers, and at least a dozen coolie-loads of pillows, cotton quilts, biscuits, Brown and Polson's corn flour, and other appliances. We soon began to find that the household was rather put to it for space. The two eldest children could be taken into their bedroom only to sleep, by reason of its size, and so passed their time for the most part in the strip of terrace between the house and the precipice which did duty for a garden, trying their best to fall over the edge, and one of the bearers trying to prevent them. The twins also had an objection to remaining in their mamma's

room during the day, as well as an antipathy to contiguity with each other, manifested by loud squalls on the part of one or the other whenever they were brought together. It was found desirable, therefore, to keep them apart; and one might generally be seen in the arms of a wet-nurse squatting on the veranda floor, partaking of natural refreshment, while the other was performing a similar operation with respect to another ayah in the dining-room. The two eldest, as I have said, were engaged in being kept from falling down the precipice; number three was usually in course of being pursued by a bearer about the drawing-room, a proceeding which he resented in pithy but strong vernacular phraseology. Poor little lanky things, they were all very pale, except where the prickly-heat had come out in red blotches, and looked thoroughly in need of the change they had got to this climate; but between the children, the six job-tailors in the veranda, and a miscellaneous assemblage of pedlars, shawl-men from Parbutti, and jewellers from Shahjehanabad, whose trays covered all the available space remaining, and whose object in life it appeared to be to sit there on the floor all day displaying their wares without selling anything, it will readily be understood that even a lover found the atmosphere rather oppressive; and as Eva could seldom be spared at these times, I am bound to say that business just now kept me a good deal at the club. Eva's sisters, I was glad to find, were both very nice-looking and well-mannered; Mary, the eldest, who had no family, the younger-looking of the two, and somewhat the neater and better dressed. Emma was disposed to be a little untidy, and indeed there was every excuse for her, as between the ayahs, the twins, and the other three children, she seemed

never to have a moment to herself. Both sisters were disposed to make a great deal of Eva, whom Mary had scarcely ever seen before, since she came out to India just as Eva went home ten years ago. Eva knew Emma better, having paid her a visit last cold season.

Mrs Barton appeared unaffectedly glad to see her daughters, and bore without a sign of complaint the discomfort occasioned by Emma's little family; but even thoroughly sensible women have the art of quarrelling with each other, and the management of the children was the cause of small occasional outbreaks. Mrs Barton—and who could speak with more authority from experience!—had a strong opinion of the efficacy of a bottle given once a-day to infants of tender age, in addition to their normal supply of natural food. Emma, on the other hand, was disposed to place reliance for the twins' nourishment on the resources of nature as developed in the two sturdy Mussulmani women who acted as her substitutes, and stoutly resented the proposal to supplement this from extraneous resources, and equally to have recourse to a certain elixir which was said to be infallible in staving off convulsions during teething. This at least I gathered inferentially to be the cause of discord, from such scraps of conversation as reached me when I came suddenly upon the scene, when the dispute immediately subsided into a sort of sniffing, as well as from a remark of Eva's that her mamma did not get on with Emma a bit.

In all these matters Mr Barton took no part. He arrived a day or two before his daughters; and I found him to be a florid, well-preserved man, inclined to be stout, and looking many years younger than his real age. He was very courteous and pleasant in manner,

but made not the smallest allusion to the matter which had brought him up, being full of the novelty of life in the mountains, which he now saw for the first time. I took the first opportunity of being alone with him to express my gratification at the prospect of becoming a member of his family, and my regret at not having been able to provide any immediate settlement for his daughter, although (I meant to add) I hoped to be able to make a satisfactory arrangement on this head immediately on our arrival in England.

"Pray, don't mention it, my dear fellow," he interrupted me by saying. "I have nothing to give my daughters, and I don't expect anything for them. They've got the fund to look to, and that's quite enough."

I explained that, as an artillery officer, I did not subscribe to the fund; and that, until I got home, I was unable to make any permanent provision for Eva, adding some expressions as to my anxiety until the business should be finally settled. "Oh, as to that," said my father-in-law, "there is no need for anxiety; young people can't expect to start in life without risks of some sort, but it is to be hoped nothing will happen to either of you." With the utterance of this wish he seemed perfectly satisfied, and I really had not another opportunity of explaining the provisional arrangements I had endeavoured to make for Eva's comfort in case of accidents.

In the morning, Mr Barton used to take a long walk about the hill, attired in knickerbockers and a suit of ticking, in company with an alpenstock of prodigious size, which he had managed to pick up in the bazaar. The walk was followed by an elaborate toilette behind the matting in the veranda, the only

apparent result of which was the changing of one set of knickerbockers and ticking for another, but which did not come to an end till long after the ladies had breakfasted, and the twins waking up from their morning sleep were distributed about the house for purposes of vicarious refreshment. By the time his own breakfast was over, and the morning paper read through, it was time to repair to the racket-court, where he used to astonish the younger men by his play, only young Greenlaw of the civil service, who won the University match while at Oxford, having a chance against him. The rackets involved another bath and toilette behind the mat, which prevented his accompanying the ladies for their evening walk; and half an hour after the late dinner was finished he disappeared from the drawing-room, and shortly afterwards a portentous snore from the recesses of Mr Barton's bedroom, which our music and conversation were quite unable to drown, announced to the company that the labours of the day had come to a happy termination.

During this time I saw less of Eva than in the earlier days of our engagement, for, as I have explained, the exigencies of her wardrobe and the milliner's visits kept her very much at home; indeed, from the preparations Mrs Barton deemed it necessary to make, one might have thought we were bound to some frontier settlement, instead of on a month's trip home. I too had a good deal to arrange before starting; leave to be obtained, bills to be paid, battery business to settle, &c.; while, even with my humble bachelor establishment, the accumulations of thirteen years' residence in the country had to be got rid of, and numerous were the letters interchanged with the good-natured Blunt, who acted as my agent, on the subject. The result was, that as Eva

and I seldom met more than twice a-day, a considerable number of servants found employment in the exchange of notes between Rhododendron Lodge and the club. Sweet little notes hers were, with not much in them, and written in a pretty, but not very legible, running hand; but they were especially gratifying, because I knew she detested writing, and that answers to invitations and all other business letters from that house always fell to be undertaken by her mamma. I have them every one preserved, down to the tiniest three-cornered scrap, in a little packet tied up with a blue ribbon which I begged from a pretty little head-dress that she was wearing one afternoon.

"*Two o'clock.*—Dearest Charlie, five o'clock will do very well, and I will be ready dressed for riding by that time. But do come sooner if you can.—Your own loving Eva." And another: "My own dear Charlie, I thought we were never going to hear from you again! Mamma says, Yes! we shall be quite alone this evening at dinner, and she hopes you will go afterwards with us to the Seymours. Papa says he can't go.—Your own Eva." Or again: "Your dear note just received. I am afraid there will be no riding this evening, for that horrid Mrs Jones says she cannot *possibly* come before six o'clock to try on the things. It is so provoking, but you will come down all the same, won't you?—Your ever-loving E." And so on. And one little envelope contains only a long lock of the pretty soft brown hair, cut, how well I remember it! after a little scuffle that arose during one of the dancing-lessons, and bestowed afterwards with a sweet kiss of forgiveness. How the faded notes bring back the happy days, "*der ersten Liebe goldne Zeit!*"

All this time I was in some per-

plexity about money matters. The sum in the Asiatic Bank was more than sufficient to take us home, but I could not leave the country without an understanding with the Bank of Central India (Limited), and to pay my debt to it would absorb all my funds. The matter might at once be managed by communicating my English news to the latter, when the management would be only too happy to let the amount stand over indefinitely, and to advance as much more as I wanted into the bargain; for to have a creditor on their books with a loan covered by anything better than personal security, would be an altogether unaccustomed feature in their business. But then the transaction would never be kept quiet, more especially as the manager of the Central India happened just then to be up at Sirmoori himself, and was a notoriously leaky vessel. I might just as well tell the story to Mrs Barton herself. However, I got over the difficulty by applying to the Asiatic, enclosing at the same time Messrs Paterson & Co.'s letter privately to the manager; and the doubts which I was beginning to feel as to the genuineness of that document, in the absence of any farther communication from the firm, were dispelled by the answer. The manager advised me by return of post that the five thousand and odd rupees, the balance of my debt to the Central India, had been paid in to my credit at their Calcutta agents. Old Morison, who had evidently been dying to ask me every time we met on the club stairs how I was going to manage to go home, appeared now more curious than ever, but he never mustered courage or impertinence to put any question about it; he probably thought that I had paid him and raised my passage-money by taking out a larger loan in the other bank, a sort of financial operation quite within his experience. A day

or two before the wedding my mind was further relieved by the expected letter from Mr Paterson. It was very brief, and contained no reference or apology for its tardy appearance, being merely to the effect that my uncle's property was all in good order, and that he would have the will duly proved, but that as he presumed I should be coming home immediately, it would be needless to enter into

details. The letter ended quaintly enough by a remark that the Queen's health was better, and that the new street in the City was to be opened by the Lord Mayor next week—a remark put in possibly to indicate that the communication was not to be regarded wholly as a business one. Somehow, notwithstanding its brevity, it conveyed a not unpleasant impression of the writer.

CHAPTER VI.—A MARRIAGE IN HIGH LIFE.

At last the wedding-day arrived ; the wedding-dress, almost to the last the cause of deep anxiety to the occupants of Rhododendron Lodge, happily arriving the evening before, and fortunately proving perfect ; but no milliner could fail to fit Eva's figure, and Carvalho was famous for her wedding-garments and her prices. A day or two earlier arrived the magic ring, and with it the necklace of opals and diamonds which formed my wedding-present. I saw it on my bride's neck for the first time when we met at the church, and surely never did jewels shine upon a fairer setting. The ceremony was fixed for three o'clock, and twenty minutes before that time the bride's party left Rhododendron Lodge in their sedans with the curtains up—for the May sun shines with power even at seven thousand feet above the sea—a procession of ten : Eva and her six bridesmaids, four of them young lady friends, and the two eldest little Garrett's, these last two occupying a sedan together—Mrs Barton, Mary, and Emma ; Barton bringing up the rear in a sedan carried by a double allowance of bearers, with a prodigious shirt-frill, never worn except on these occasions, and a single-breasted blue frock-coat of wondrous cut, and several sizes too large even for him. It need hardly be said that all Sir-

moori was assembled at the church, for everybody knew Mrs Barton and had received an invitation ; while the sprinkling of scarlet among the various coloured dresses of the sedan-bearers clustered outside the church-door, betokened that the Lord High Commissioner and Lady Killarney had honoured the occasion with their presence. This part of the ceremony I cannot say I saw myself, my place being at the altar-rails, attended by Blunt as best man, who had with his usual good-nature abandoned his intention of taking leave later on, at the best season, in order to be present now. My first view this day of my bride was as she entered the church with her father, and advanced with downcast eyes to where I stood. She went through the ceremony with perfect self-possession ; for happily none of the misgivings which at times rose unbidden in my mind troubled her gentle heart, and she looked as happy and serene as beautiful.

The marriage concluded, the whole party adjourned to the house in a procession of sedans and horse-men, which must have covered nearly the whole of the narrow road between it and the church. This, however, again I did not see, as of course we were the first to start, so the account is merely inferential. It has always struck me

that the bridegroom looks rather out of place at a wedding, being, so to speak, an awkward although perhaps a necessary ingredient in the affair; but nowhere does he appear more so than at a wedding in the Himalaya. The bride must of course return in her sedan, for, to say nothing of the sun, the dust would utterly spoil her dress were she to walk; so the bridegroom must perforce either walk or ride by her side—and most men would prefer the latter alternative, since it is not every one who can keep up gracefully with the pace of four shuffling sedan-bearers in the prime of condition. But even then, ride he never so well, the general effect is a good deal marred by the need which arises every minute either to push on in front or drop behind, at the numerous points where the narrow road affords room for only the sedan to pass, and on such occasions he hardly looks as if he belonged to the bride, or the bride to him. However, the short journey was soon accomplished, and all the visitors assembled, as many as could find standing-room, in the drawing-room, where the wedding-presents were on view—the rest in the veranda and narrow space in front of it above the precipice. The gifts were handsome and numerous, for Mrs Barton was very popular, and Eva not less so. Her papa had contributed his customary watch and chain; Lord and Lady Killarney a handsome bracelet; while vases of every variety covered the table, and promised to form an alarming addition to our travelling luggage. Nor was Sir William Brooke wanting to the occasion or his reputation for gallantry. He had been absent during the last week or so on a tour to visit the Bhamáni diamond-fields, and after spending nearly forty-eight hours in an inspection of that important locality, had returned to elucidate the subject in an exhaus-

tive report of two hundred and forty-seven paragraphs, wherein he showed conclusively, in his usual picturesque style, that if the diamonds should prove to be plentiful it might be a remunerative business to the Government to engage in, but that if they were scarce the affair would be carried on at a loss; and having thus stated his candid opinion, left it to the wisdom of the Lord High Commissioner and Senate to determine what should be done. Sir William was now present, radiant with white waistcoat, and contributed a superb album with a *carte* of himself on the fly-leaf, his elbow resting gracefully on a copy of his celebrated report on the Doolees of the Chabootra.

And now, after receiving the felicitations of her friends, the bride disappeared for a while, and presently her sister Mary made a sign to me to come into the back passage, where stood Eva in her riding-habit. The horses were ready up a by-path at the back of the house; and before the guests had done with their ices and champagne, and the Lord High Commissioner by leaving had given the signal for the party to break up, we had got beyond the inhabited part of the hill on our way to a little cottage a few miles further in the mountains, on the margin of a noble forest, and much affected by young couples as a starting-point for their honeymoon trip.

Time pressing, our tour lasted but a few days, when we returned to Rhododendron Lodge to make our final preparations for departure. Emma, whose husband was coming up on three months' leave later in the season, had now moved into a house of her own, and only Mary remained with her mother, so there was now plenty of room; and I am bound to say the absence of the children added considerably to the comfort of the remaining occupants—so much

so, that Mr Barton was occasionally to be found sitting in the drawing-room talking to visitors, and would even return from rackets of an evening in time to take a walk with his wife and Mary before dinner. He had discovered, indeed, that after all a covered court was not such a bad thing to play in; and his morning walks with the big alpenstock for a companion having developed into a habit, the notion of a change of life was getting to be distasteful, and he began to throw out mysterious hints about applying for a year's leave and spending the winter up here, which it could be seen already caused Mrs Barton some uneasiness.

And now the days flew apace as our brief stay drew to an end. We could not loiter. As it was, we should probably come in for the south-west gales in the passage from Bombay, and all their attendant discomforts, and the heat in the plains was reported to be very great, so that every day's delay would make our land journey worse. We had one or two rides before parting with the horses, and, looking at Eva as, dressed in the riding-habit as of yore, she galloped along with the little grey bounding under her, it was difficult to realise the greatness of the change that had come over our lives, and that the girl with whom I had barely a speaking acquaintance a month ago was now really my wife. In fact, except that I had given up my club chambers, things seemed to be quite unchanged, and everything at Simla went on just the same as ever. Akbar, by the way, was bought by a general officer who had lately come out from England to take up a division; Selim was accepted by Blunt as a parting present, and he promised it should never be allowed to fall into bad hands; but its young mistress almost

cried as the pretty creature was led away.

We went to one ball at the Castle before starting. Eva again wanted not to dance, because she could not dance with me, but I overruled her; and I am sure a prettier or more graceful ornament to a ball-room was never seen than this young bride, who evidently enjoyed the dancing for its own sake, without much reference to her partners.

"You are to be envied your good fortune, Captain West," said the Lord High Commissioner, as he came up behind me, "in winning so sweet a bride; but we shall not readily forgive you for carrying off our brightest ornament in such a hurry."

I daresay some of the people, as they saw my long face above the collar of my full-dress jacket, where from a corner of the room I looked on at the dancing over the shoulder of little Tommy Cuffies, of the Civil Service, who also was not a dancing man, thought that I looked gloomy and ill-tempered; but, in truth, I was unaffectedly pleased to see Eva so happy and so admired; and having won my prize, I could afford to be free from jealousy. But I could not help thinking whether the pretty bloom on Eva's cheek would withstand the ordeal of heat she was about to undergo. She, poor child, having never spent a hot season in the plains, had no conception of what was before her; but I could not help asking myself if I were right in exposing her to this risk in pursuit of a mere phantom, and whether it would not be better and less selfish to put off starting till October. But I was too obstinate, and too much bent on my pursuit, phantom or not, to give way to these scruples.

At last the morning of our departure came. A crowd of porters stood without the veranda chattering or

squabbling as the mate distributed the boxes and bundles among them. My bearer, who was to go with us—Eva's ayah had struck at the last moment and stopped behind—had literally girt up his loins, and was loading a diminutive mule with a miscellaneous assortment of brass pots and blankets. Eva's sedan, with its porters supplemented by a crew of four nearly naked additional men, stood in the veranda, and my pony waited outside—the identical piebald with the white nose and evil eye which on a former memorable occasion had stood there as a signal of my triumph. Early breakfast was eaten, the soda-water, tea, champagne, and biscuits packed, and all the family assembled to see us off. Mrs Barton was in tears: I think she was as fond of Eva as a mother could be of a daughter she had seen

during only one year of the last twelve; and, to add to her trouble, "Joe" was beginning to put forth more pronounced and ominous hints about the superiority of covered courts, and she was in evident fear, not without cause, that now he had once found his way to the Hills she should never get him back to Toghluabad again. Barton himself made no reply to the running fire of predictions that his wife threw out of the melancholy fate in store for her, but stood leaning on his alpenstock, a pair of stout legs enclosed in knickerbockers, and a good-natured obstinate smile on his face. He said little at parting, but gave sufficient evidence of his depth of feeling by putting off his morning walk till after our departure, a good two hours later than his usual time.

CHAPTER VII.—A TRYING JOURNEY.

It is difficult to believe in the existence of the Indian heat in the plains below when living on the cool mountain-top; but we had not long to wait before being reminded of what was in store for us, and what the ordinary lot of the less fortunate majority of our fellow-countrymen in the East. For the last few days the usually clear air of the mountains had been succeeded by a haze obscuring the prospect, and even at Sirmoori the heat came up to the level of a very hot English summer; and if the thermometer stands at 85° seven thousand feet above the level of the sea, the heat at lower altitudes may be inferred by a simple rule of three. The end of the mountain-ridge reached, the beautiful woods of Sirmoori come to a sudden termination, and we plunged down the steep mountain-side, the treeless, shrubless, sun-

baked slope, down for two thousand feet of ugliest mountain landscape to the hot shadeless valley beneath. Thence the way lies for forty miles over a succession of minor mountains which intervene between Sirmoori and the plains, bare and steep without being grand, over which the path rises and falls with a fine contempt of gradients. Midway, about noon, we halted for breakfast at a little shed dignified by the name of hotel, and towards the afternoon we mounted the last crest, which rises immediately above the plains. This, like Sirmoori, is a European settlement; the top of the ridge is dotted with cottages, and the barracks of the convalescent depot of British troops occupy nearly the highest point of the hill. The breeze rustled through the pines on the crest, cool and grateful after the sultry air of the valley we had

passed. The residents beginning to bestir themselves for their evening walks and rides; a few soldiers working in the barrack-gardens; some children playing in the square,—such was our last glimpse of the healthy European life as we plunged down the hillside, not to be met with again till the journey should be ended.

It was dark when the foot of the mountains was reached at the little town of Palki, a desolate hamlet composed of stores and diminutive hostelrys, where the sedan is exchanged for a post carriage. We had hurried through the mountains in order to make the next portion of the journey to the railway by night; but Eva was dreadfully tired with the forty miles of jolting in a sedan, and was quite unfit for further travelling, yet to stay seemed worse than to go on. The happy travellers bound upwards revel in the barrenness of this little town, whose purgatorial wretchedness seems but to enhance the expectation of the mountain paradise awaiting them above; but even they never stay longer than they can help: and a brief meal was partaken of while the carriage was packed, and the old bearer mounting on the roof, we started for Sikhistan. The night was close and sultry beyond anything I remember even in Upper India at the end of May. The miserable ponies, performing their stage for the fourth time that day, could scarcely be goaded out of a walk; the Mussulman coachman was making his second return journey since the previous night, and, overpowered with his eighty miles of labour of the box, flogged the unhappy beasts with less than customary gusto. No stars were to be seen; a sort of tangible cloud seemed to settle down over the earth; our motion, such as it was, produced no sense of air. Eva lay back ex-

hausted while I fanned her. At last she appeared to be asleep, and I fell into an uneasy doze, from which I was awakened by the jabbering of the coachman and others changing horses. We had reached the wide sandy bed of a river, now dry, and bullocks were being yoked in to drag us across. The night was as dark as before, but suddenly through its stillness could be heard a low murmuring like distant thunder, increasing every instant. It was a sand-storm coming up, which, before there was time to turn back and find a better place to meet it in, burst upon us. It was evidently going to be a severe one, and I helped Eva out of the carriage, not apparently too soon. So violent a sand-storm I had never experienced before, and the sandy expanse of a dry river-bed was a bad place to meet it in. To stand upright was impossible, equally so to turn towards the wind, which pelted the face with an avalanche-like shower of burning, suffocating sand. Where the earth ended and the air began, could not be told; the whole bed of the river seemed in motion. I pulled Eva to the ground, and we sat there to prevent being blown away. To speak was impossible for the choking dust, and to hear equally so for the roar of the earth-laden wind. What had become of the rest of the party we knew not; I could not see my hands held up before my face. It was a darkness that might be felt. I held Eva firmly, for if we separated there would be no chance of finding each other again, and we sat thus for a time which seemed interminable, but which may have been an hour. At one time there was a lull for a few seconds, and the old bearer answered my hail from a few yards off; then the storm came on again as badly as ever, and a bank of sand fast forming behind

us had just compelled our changing positions when the violence of the wind began to abate. The storm did not, however, end abruptly, as I hoped it might, nor was it followed by hail, as often happens; and it was not until the dawn succeeded to the weary night that we were able to stir. Then at last, as it gradually became light, we were able to discern dimly the carriage lying overturned, behind which the old bearer was crouching, while beyond it various mounds of sand indicated the luggage which had fallen off the roof. The coachman had been sitting on the ground a few yards further off; the bullocks and driver had disappeared.

Our first business was to lift up the luggage till we came to the basket of soda-water, which, although quite hot, went some way towards restoring Eva, who appeared in an alarming state of exhaustion. Meanwhile the coachman, who had gone back to the last stage, whither the bullocks had found their way, returned with some people, by whose united efforts we got the carriage up on its wheels, and soon after sunrise we had recovered most of our effects; the bulk of the dust, which was a good foot deep in the carriage, was got rid off, and we were able to resume our journey. But our progress was slow, for it still blew very hard, and the road was obstructed by fallen trees, the number of which showed that it was fortunate we had been caught by the storm in a more open place. Meanwhile the heat continued intense, although the sun was entirely obscured by the dust; and it was not until nearly twelve o'clock that, as we crawled along, something like human habitations loomed through the hazy air. They were the barracks of Sikhistan, and shortly afterwards we reached the hotel, and I lifted Eva seemingly more dead than alive out of the carriage.

This was a bad beginning for our long journey, and I would fain have stayed and given my poor little wife some rest, for the hotel was clean and comfortable, and comparatively cool; but the whisperings of conscience which counselled a return to the mountains were silenced by the pride which refused to confess its selfish promptings, and if the journey were to be continued we should be too late for the steamer at Bombay unless we pushed on; so we started by rail the same night. We had of course a whole compartment to ourselves—for there were no travellers downwards at this season—and were able to make up comfortable beds on the seats; but there were plenty of third-class native passengers, and the noise they made at each station effectually prevented Eva, whose nerves were upset by last night's storm, from getting any sleep. The train stopped at a station about every half-hour, and there seemed always to be more persons awaiting to go on than there was room for, and a desperate struggle ensued on every occasion for the places, with an indescribable babel of voices, old men, young men, women and children, wandering jabbering about the platform, staggering under the bundles they one and all carried,—the railway officials belabouring everybody else, and trying to solve the problem of stowing every two persons in a place where there was only room for one. Not without many orders and ringing of bells the train got under way; and the clamour of the unfortunate third-class passengers has hardly subsided into a more suppressed murmur before the next station is reached, and the babel of sounds and ringing of bells begins over again. This with the heat—the thermometer stood at 95° at midnight, happily there was no renewal of the storm—and the jolting on this roughest of railways,

rendered sleep impossible; and when, before five o'clock, the sun came up, Eva was less refreshed than when she started.

And now the day goes wearily on, marked only by the change in the sun's shadow, the rising of the day wind and its accompaniment of dust, and the ever-increasing heat. The country is everywhere the same—a perfectly flat, desert-looking plain of reddish-brown hue, with here and there a village, its walls of the same colour. It looks a desert, for there are no signs of crops, which were reaped two months ago, and no hedgerows, but perhaps here and there an acacia-tree. Not a traveller is stirring on the road, not a soul to be seen in the fields, but an occasional stunted bullock is standing in such shade as the thin trees afford. At about every ten miles a station is reached, each exactly like the previous one and the next following, and with the same set of expectant travellers crowding the platform, each with his bundle on the end of a staff, converted by the arrival of the train into the same excited, noisy, belaboured seekers for room as the travellers of the night. At twelve o'clock the thermometer in the carriage rose to 110°; at three it stood at 114°. At the Shahjehanabad Junction we stopped for an hour and found a meal prepared of sodden cutlets and curry, with a decoction of tea, the whole plentifully garnished with flies; but Eva was past taking anything but soda-water and biscuits, and I was not much more hungry myself, so the tempting viands were put away to serve for the passengers by the next day's train. At the Akbarabad Junction there was another halt and the same bill of fare. Gradually the sun went down, and the wind and the dust subsided, and another stifling night succeeded, with uneasy slumbers, broken by the ever-recurring hubbub of the half-hourly

stoppages. But the short summer night is soon ended, and the fiery enemy makes his appearance again, this time on the left: we have passed the Prág Junction in the night, and the train has now changed its course and is working across the peninsula to the western coast. Now followed another long day much the same as the previous one, except that the thermometer showed a little less degree of heat; that the carriage, the seats, and everything within, were rather more dusty than before; and that instead of the everlasting plain, hills can be seen on either side in the distance through the haze. But if the heat was less the fair traveller was less able to bear it. All this day she was hot and feverish, and lay almost speechless on the couch I had made of the seat. Wet towels hung up to the windows made the carriage a little cooler, but it was difficult to keep them moist under the rapid evaporation caused by our motion through the parching air. Happily we had plenty of ice, otherwise I think Eva would not have lived through the day, so utterly prostrated did she seem by the heat. Not a single European traveller had joined the train since we started, two days ago; and here even the third-class carriages were almost deserted, for we were passing through a poorer, less thickly-peopled country. Almost the only persons in the train were the engine-driver and guard; the latter, a burly ruddy-looking man, evidently an old soldier, came frequently to the door of our carriage to exchange a few words, and inquire after Eva, whose prostrate condition excited his compassion. "The lady seems to feel the heat a great deal, sir," he said, as he stood at our carriage-door at one halting-place, and partook of some claret and ice. "Yes," I replied; "this long journey, too, tries her. But you must

have a hot time of it going up and down in this way." "Yes," said he, "I ought to be pretty well accustomed to it by this time, but this last week beats everything within my experience. The engine-driver, you see, he gets changed every eighty miles or so, but I have to go right through. That's where it is, you see. I declare I feel almost dazed and done up." And dazed and done up he began to look as the day wore on. At last I noticed that we were stopping longer than usual at a station, and, looking out, observed the station-master with several persons staring in at the guard's carriage, so got out to see what was the matter. The poor fellow was dead on the floor—dead from the heat! We could not leave him in this jungle; so, covering the body with a cloth, we went on till, an hour or two later, a station was reached where a European station-master was in charge, and a doctor and other officials living in the neighbourhood; and the corpse was made over for interment with a written statement of the circumstances, which the engine-driver signed as well as myself. The poor fellow, it appears, had a wife and children two hundred miles up the line; the station-master promised to send a subordinate to them by the next up-train to tell the poor woman all that there was to tell; and there seemed no more to be done. I did not let Eva know what had happened, and she was too unwell to notice that anything was the matter; and I confess to being too much concerned with her condition to think long about this poor fellow, except so far as that his death shadowed forth the likelihood of a greater calamity.

A third night succeeded this terrible day, and when morning came the fever and continued shaking of

the carriage together had greatly aggravated my wife's prostrate condition. She complained that all her limbs ached, and every jolt of the train seemed to cause her agony. She was quite unable to lift her head; and but for the ice, of which there was happily abundance, and the champagne I mixed with it, I don't think she would have reached the end of the journey alive. As it was, I counted anxiously the tedious minutes between the stations, which seemed to be ever farther and farther apart as we went on. And conscience heightened my distress at witnessing her suffering, brought about by my selfish impetuosity, and I felt my conduct to be the more shameful that my poor gentle sufferer never reproached me so much as by a look for bringing her this journey, but accepted her condition with perfect resignation. That persons should make journeys of indefinite length at any season of the year in the way of business, on promotion, or even to take up a short lease of acting appointments, she knew to be of common occurrence, and at mention of the word business her curiosity ended. I could not venture to tell her what I now felt to be the case, that my business, seen under the sobering influence of her alarming state, seemed now to be the merest pretence of reality, that it could have been easily deferred for a few months, and that the real object of our hurried journey was a possible fool's errand. How bitterly I regretted now, as the endless milestones seemed to come up ever and ever more slowly, that I had not turned back at Sikhistán, when return was possible! It was too late, however, to think of going back now; there was nothing for it but to push on to the coast, watching my poor sweet patient in an agony of anxiety.

When the third morning arrived,

there was a change in the weather. The sun was hidden, but this time by clouds, not dust, and a cool breeze was blowing from the westward, and soon we ran into a violent storm of thunder and lightning with torrents of rain. It was the first burst of the monsoon on the Western Ghats. The change acted at once like magic on Eva, and she was so revived during her long halt at the top of the great incline, that I began to hope her prostration might be due to the heat and fatigue she had undergone, and not to any serious illness. The rain felt cold and chilly after the heat, and a warm shawl was grateful in the waiting-room whither I had carried her; while I took the opportunity of our stay here to get the carriage cleared of its three days' accumulation of dust and engine-ashes. The train now started again on its progress down the great incline, wrapped in mist and rain which obscured all view; but at one time the fog rolled away for a few minutes, and we could see the line winding down what seemed to be the perpendicular face of the hill for hundreds of feet, while below was stretched a wide expanse of flat country, all clothed in green, fringed with fantastic mountains, with winding rivers and what seemed to be lakes glistening in the morning sunshine, the sea visible in the far distance. Then the mist rolled over again and blotted out the view which, after the desert of heat and dust we had passed through, seemed like a glimpse of Paradise; while the sensation I felt at witnessing my wife's restoration only those can appreciate who have begun to lose hope when watching by some dear one stricken with illness.

The bottom of the great incline reached, we entered again upon the sunshine, and Eva, half sitting up on a couch of cushions and pillows, was

able to breathe the fresh sea gale which rattled against the carriage-blinds, and to enjoy in languid fashion the beauty of the changing view, as we rushed past woods, wild hills, and lakes set in mountains, till, running through a flat expanse of rice-fields in all the greenness of the early season, we arrived at last at our journey's end, two days before the date for departure of the mail-steamer.

Unfortunately, we were too late for a calm passage. Eva was a bad sailor, and seeing how knocked up she was before starting, I bitterly repented anew of my selfish rashness which had torn her away from her comfortable mountain home at such a season. But regrets were vain. To return was out of the question; the doctor whom I called in said the change to England would now be better than stopping at Bombay; and the second day after our arrival there we started on our voyage.

It was blowing very fresh that morning, and the little tug which took us off to the "Beejapoor" bobbed up and down in the short cross sea of the harbour, thoroughly drenching all the passengers and luggage, and giving us a foretaste of what might be expected outside. There was a respite when the deck of the steamer was reached, for the great vessel lay motionless at her anchor, as if defying the wind which rattled through her rigging, and preparing for the conflict awaiting her. This soon arrived; the mails came on board, and the few persons who had braved the harbour waves to see the last of their friends returned to the tug—among these my old bearer. Dear old man! he had been in my service for a dozen years, during which time we had exchanged perhaps half-a-dozen words a-day, yet I believe he was as attached to me as I was to him. I have seldom felt more keenly the benefit of being

well off than when it enabled me to leave this faithful old fellow independent of further service, and to spend the rest of his days with the wife and children to whom he used to remit about two-thirds of his wages, and whom he had been accustomed to see during a brief visit every third or fourth year.

The mails on board, we got under way immediately, and I had hardly time to see Eva made comfortable in her cabin when the harbour entrance was reached, and the Beejapoor made her first pitch downwards, as if saluting her adversary, and commenced to fight her way across the Indian Ocean in the teeth of the south-west monsoon. Then the dance began;—first a great plunge down which seemed as if there was to be no recovery, and found a responsive vibration at the bottom of the stomach; then a great roll to the right till the boats on the davits were rushing through the water, and it looked as if a very little more were needed to turn her over altogether; but she is up again, and makes a corresponding roll to the left, as if preferring to capsize on that side. This evidently must be the last roll; but no, she thinks better of it, and comes up again on her keel for a bit; and so goes on repeating the process *ad infinitum* by way of proving her stability. I could not have supposed that a two-thousand ton ship could be tossed about in this way. But the Beejapoor had no cargo to speak off, and a duck-punt or a Rob Roy canoe could hardly have danced about more. Happily there were only half-a-dozen passengers, and room for nearly two hundred, so that, although the ports were all closed, the air below was tolerably pure. Had the ship been crowded we should have been suffocated, for although it was cool enough on deck, it was stifling in the cabins.

One poor fellow, an indigo planter, going home with liver complaint, and who seemed at death's door, stuck to the deck, himself and his mattress being lashed to the saloon skylight, on which he lay, drenched with spray and occasional waves, and only less miserable than the native servant, who, rather than leave his master unattended, had broken his caste and braved the horrors of the dreaded "black water." This faithful creature staggered about more dead than alive to wait upon the sick man, and when the latter was asleep, lay huddled on the wet deck below him, the very personification of unselfish patience. Happily I had no time to be seasick, for Eva's state called for all my energies. I tried hard to get a servant at Bombay, but at this season no eligible ones offered themselves; and the only two candidates were a stout gunner's wife with a strong Milesian accent and a very red face, suggestive of country rum, and a young lady from Goa with bare feet, and a dirty petticoat, which comprised apparently the whole of her wardrobe, who spoke only the unintelligible *patois* of her native district, and admitted under examination through the medium of an interpreter, that this would be her first experience of sea voyages. Fortunately the stewardess was efficient, and had no other calls on her time, there being no other ladies on board; but I could scarcely bear to leave Eva even for a moment, for her only pleasure seemed to be to hold my hand as she lay, her eyes closed, a death-like pallor on her face. I could see that the ship doctor was alarmed about her, and indeed there seemed cause for fear. Even the champagne which was so efficacious on the railway journey seemed to fail; solid food she could take none. Trying as that journey had been, how often I

wished we were back in the train again. It really seemed as if my poor darling could not last much longer; and I felt like a shame-stricken heartless villain for being the cause. For nine days we went on in this fashion. Sometimes it blew a little harder, with squalls of rain, sometimes a little less; but the wind was always strong, and always nearly dead ahead. Not a sail did we see in our course except once, when we passed the outward mail-steamer scudding along under sail at fifteen knots an hour. We were going about five. At last, on the tenth morning, both wind and sea began sensibly to abate, and by evening we were running along in perfectly calm water, with the mountains of Arabia fifty miles off on our beam. We had worked through the monsoon. The next day we arrived at Aden, scarcely an hour too soon, for without the food which Eva was now able to take, she could hardly have held out much longer.

The voyage up the Red Sea was calm, and as Eva could now keep the deck both night and day, the heat was bearable. But the passage through the Indian Ocean, added to his disease, had been too much for the sick man, who found a last resting-place about midway between Aden and Suez. His native servant sat in the waist of the ship for the rest of the voyage, hardly moving from his blanket except to make his frugal mid-day meal of parched grain, with a drink of water from a jar he had brought with him, and the care of which had been the only thing that divided his attention to his master. The latter had been too weak at the last to specify any instructions for the payment of wages to the poor fellow, who we found possessed only a few rupees; but we got up a subscription for him, and made him over to the agent at Suez,

who promised to send him back to India by the next steamer.

Arrived at Suez, the air becoming perceptibly cooler as we approached the head of the Red Sea, a few hours' railway journey carried us into a Mediterranean climate. That sea was in its happiest mood, and as we steamed past Crete and the coast of Greece, the light northerly breeze brought life into my poor wearied darling. The weather was perfect, the steamer not too crowded, the table good, and the little red-faced Italian captain a model of good-nature, who, to oblige us, took the inner course among the islands. Eva could now even join the saloon party at meals, but for the most part she would sit in an easy-chair, wrapped in a thick shawl—for European breezes struck chill after the broiling we had gone through—watching the scenery as one island and mountain after another rose into view. To see her hourly getting better, the sense of rest and freedom from the continued anxiety of the last three weeks, the delicious air, and the beauty of the scenery, made this short voyage one of the happiest times in my life.

By the time we reached Brindisi, Eva was able to walk the deck, and the peaceful aspect of the Adriatic tempted us to continue the voyage to Venice. It would have been wiser to have tarried a while in Italy, before undertaking another long land journey; but Eva did not feel disposed for sight-seeing, and in my selfishness I perhaps exaggerated the strength of the desire she expressed to be at home; but the result was that we travelled steadily onwards, only stopping for a few hours here and there, and, arriving at Paris late one evening, started for Calais by the morning train. The Channel was as propitious as the Mediterranean; and as we sped

along in the mail express through Kent, England welcomed us in her freshest, brightest summer garb. Was ever grass so green before as clothes these rounded slopes? And then the air! No monotonous red glare or uniform dull mist, but the sunshine which lights up the country we are dashing through is set off by a background of fleecy clouds in the distance with golden edges toward the sun and dark shadows behind; and see, over yonder, a summer shower is falling, while here the landscape is dancing in golden light. People talk about the wonders of the East; surely the wonders of home are greater. One must have been absent a dozen years from it to appreciate its beauties; nor does the foretaste obtained in passing through Italy and France dull the sense of surprise and delight at the infinite freshness and beauty of England when revisited in early summer. Are those monstrous animals which are feeding in that field tame bison, or can they be English sheep? And see! what is that wild beast crouching against the bank below the wood? Is it a wolf? or is it a donkey? No! it is an English hare, which cocks up its tail and gallops off leisurely as we pass by, too much accustomed to the phenomenon to hurry himself about express trains. Then the trim country-houses. Here is one, modern Elizabethan, with its grounds bordered by noble trees, its sunny greenhouses and shrubberies, its garden ablaze with flowers, and its trim croquet-lawn, the very spot one would select to spend a happy life in, and serene old age. Surely it is the trimmest and prettiest

place in Kent. But no! we shoot through a tunnel, and here is another, Victorian Gothic, which looks if anything a trifle more comfortable and complete. Close upon it follows a third, and so the whole way through the country. How puzzling it must be to decide where to settle! Here we rush by a perfect cluster of snug places, each in apple-pie order, each representing an income of three thousand a-year at the least. Where do all these people get three thousand a-year from? They can't all of them, like myself, have had bachelor uncles to leave them that sum. Now we come to villas on a smaller scale, but still complete and comfortable, belonging evidently to well-to-do people who go up every day to town. The occupiers of that terrace must be able to spend quite fifteen hundred a-year. And now the houses are closer and smaller; but still what prosperous occupations the people must have who occupy them, and what an interminable number of them there must be, descending in prosperity like the figures in a Dutch auction, as we get nearer to London, still ever so far off! people with a thousand a-year, eight hundred, six hundred, five hundred, four hundred, and so on, till that hideous junction is reached where no one would live who had any income at all to speak of. And now comes a change—a bird's-eye view of smoke, squalor, poverty, and dirt, till at last, crossing the river, we are lost in a maze of walls and covered ways, and finally are shot into the station, and find a termination of our journey in the Grand Belgravia Hotel.

NEW BOOKS.

AN exceptional life is generally a short one; when men live long, not only do they tame down out of those ardours and enthusiasms which lead to everything that is strange, eccentric, and Quixotic, but the routine of existence pulls them softly down from their pedestals, takes the glory out of the ideals they have cherished, and reconciles them to the ordinary course of the world. The young man who is perfectly content with the arrangements of society round him, who has no desire to overturn anything or mend anything, is a safe man, likely to live all his days out, and provident of comfort in the long level which he sees before him. Many, it is true, who have been enthusiastic in their youth, calm down with the touch of years, and become content with everything as soon as they themselves are established in comfort; but it is the young generally who make those beautiful, impossible attempts for the good of their fellow-men, at which we wonder and admire, with a half-shame of our own egotism which prevents us from following their example, and a half-pride in our superior wisdom which keeps us from trying it. Such an exceptional existence was that of Edward Denison.* He lived but thirty years in this world; and therefore nature, prescient of the near ending, felt no necessity upon her to "stay," but let him run his course, as a runner in a short race is justified in doing, with an expenditure of force which would be impossible were the effort a long one. He rushed at his goal, flinging himself headlong into the race; and it is true he did not succeed—what man ever succeeds in

bringing down the conditions of a heavenly life either to May Fair or Bethnal Green?—but he did his best, with lavish expenditure of all that he had and was, and has left us his bright but broken essay at existence for our instruction and reproof—a thing which few of us can imitate, which is indeed an interruption of the peaceful monotony which makes life possible, but which yet stimulates the listlessness of that practicable quiet as nothing else could do half so well.

The book in which this brief life is epitomised—we cannot say even recorded, for much that goes to make up the attraction of a sympathetic record is left out—is neither eloquent nor very wise. It is a basket of fragments; and even the fragments contain a great many crudities, scraps of immature reflection and hasty opinion. We can see but dimly, through the veil of a phraseology which has become common to a class, the individual features of the man. No attempt has been made, indeed, to convey these individual features to us. His friends have judged, perhaps wisely, that the life which had little more than promise to make it interesting to mankind, did not require nor call for fuller exposition. A hope, an earnest endeavour, a warm and vigorous impulse—this is what we find in the book. The young hero was the son of the Bishop of Salisbury, and thus only nephew of the late Speaker; he was educated at Eton and Oxford: and he lived, as we have said, about thirty years; travelled much, worked much, fell ill and died; just the briefest uneventful history—just

* Letters and other Writings of the late Edward Denison, M.P. for Newark; edited by Sir Baldwin Leighton, Bart. London: Bentley & Son.

enough to make happy and to break the hearts of some few individuals, to move more lightly a larger sympathetic circle, but not to affect the world. Yet there is something to touch the world in the brief record. Among his travels Edward Denison made one which few men of his class and generation have made. He went not to the Himalayas, or the Caucasus, or the Matterhorn, but to the East End of London; and finding there a mass of his fellow-creatures as hopeless as savages, and less happy, with no man caring for their souls, but only giving such a spasmodic regard to their bodies as injured body and soul together—this young gentleman went and lived among them in modest silence, making no commotion, organising no society, but doing what one true man could do to mend matters, and qualifying himself, as he hoped, to plead their cause and explain their circumstances, and help to legislate for them in the days to come. This hope has not come to pass. He has carried his knowledge instead to the footstool of a Sovereign still better acquainted with their troubles than himself; and let us hope has had his eager heart stilled by the revelation of some wonderful way in which all their miseries shall be utilised or compensated—the only thought which can give the sickened soul any consolation in sight of all the terrible paradoxes amid which we are compelled to live.

The central chapter in his life was short, not lasting more than eight months; this fact, however, does not detract from but rather adds to its importance: for there was no foolishness of enthusiasm about the act, but a serious resolution to see with his own eyes and hear with his own ears, and do with his own hands whatever it might be possible to do. He was under no religious vow of

total self-abnegation—he had duties to his family and the world which he did not abandon. In short, the whole enterprise was as legitimate, as excusable, as if it had been an Alpine expedition; the only difference being that he went not to risk lives but to save them—not to explore bare rocks and frozen ice, but men—and that his purpose was at once patriotic and Christian, having the highest meaning, instead of having no meaning at all. We will not promise the reader that he will be half so much amused by this book as he was by Mr Whymper's Alpine rambles; but yet Philpot Street, Commercial Road, is not without an interest of its own.

It is not so very long ago but that most of us can remember the little stir made in the papers about a "Society for organising Charitable Relief," which was got up under the auspices, we think, of the then Bishop of London—and by means of which the young men of fashion who have nothing to do, were, we were told, to be converted into missionaries of charity, and taught such a lesson at the same time as to the seriousness of life as could not fail to leave its influence upon their own butterfly existence. For once this sanguine anticipation of the newspapers came true—if in no other case at least in this one. The East End was at that time (1869) in the full flood of one of its great crises of distress. Mr Denison had this sea of misery thus brought before his eyes. He saw how deep and how dense it was, and at the same time he saw that the young gentlemen from the clubs, with the best intentions in the world, and plenty of money in their purses, were not the kind of agency likely to do much good in it—or at least that, if good was to be done, the conditions of the work must be changed. "It was impossible, as he describes, to do

any adequate work without residing on the spot, the waste of energy in locomotion being itself an interruption to steady non-intermittent application such as he had prescribed for himself." He accordingly went, with the courage which is so much more unusual in this kind of enterprise than in any other, to the very field of action, and established himself in one of the unlovely streets in that terrible desert of unloveliness, where life puts on its most sordid garb. To be sure there was not nearly so much real suffering involved as there is in the life of the traveller who goes to Africa, or Asia, or even to him who goes fishing in Norway, or pursuing big game into other unknown parts of the earth; but the effort was immensely greater, for neither excitement, nor romance, nor novelty were to be found on the dread and dreary level of the East End. When we add that the hero of this achievement was in delicate health, and "found it impossible to keep tolerably well in London," the reader will see how true was this modest martyrdom, which took place in absolute silence, with no applauding world looking on, and nothing but a steadfast determination to serve God and man in the way that seemed to him most thorough and effectual, to keep his courage up.

It would seem to have been the sense of inefficiency conveyed to him by his preliminary work in the Society for the Relief of Distress which moved Mr Denison to this extreme step. Every man or woman who ever took part in a public movement of charity must have felt the same—the sickening sense of inadequacy, the feeling that their work rather increased than lessened the distress around, and the still more miserable consciousness that the mass of wretchedness was also a mass of falsehood, and that faith

in their fellow-creatures was here at least impossible. This last and bitterest point is not referred to in the following letter, which, however, expresses the young writer's perception of the ineffectual character of the public work:—

"If I am not going to be all the winter in town I must give up my post under the Society for the Relief of Distress. Indeed I am not sure that I should not have done so in any case. I can't believe in those doles of bread and meat, and the time they occupy in distribution withholds me from more solid and permanent schemes of assistance. I should visit as before in that district on my own 'hook,' and apply what money I could scrape together myself or beg from friends, in dealing thoroughly and radically with a small number of cases of aggravated distress. These bread-and-meat doles are only doing the work of the poor-rates, and are absolutely useless: the chief use of this Society, or of any other, in my view, consists in bringing a considerable number of persons belonging to the upper classes in actual contact with the misery of their fellow-citizens, and so convincing them of the necessity of social reform."

One of the first results of Mr Denison's work was to convince him that the evil he had devoted himself to help was in a great measure caused by the injudicious good works of others. The money which in England so many comfortable well-off people are so ready to give, especially at those times when comfort becomes our English God—at Christmas, for instance, and in the chill depths of winter, when thousands of persons who would shrink from the responsibility of looking after a single poor family send large sums of money to some public charity by way of compounding with God and their consciences—was in his eyes the very seed of pauperism. His opinions on this subject are most decisive:—

"The real truth is, sensation writing

and reckless alms are fast doing away the great work of the new poor-law in bringing up the people to providence and self-restraint. We are falling back into the bad old ways of the times at the beginning of the Peace. You will find all the men who really give themselves most trouble about the poor, are the most alive to the terrible evils of the so-called charity which pours money into the haunts of misery and vice every winter. If we could but get one honest newspaper to write down promiscuous charity, and write up sweeping changes, not so much in our poor-law theory as in our poor-law practice, something might be done. . . . I have been busy, and muddled and worried lately. Things are so bad down here, and giving money away only makes them worse. I am beginning seriously to believe that all bodily aid to the poor is a mistake, and that the real thing is to let things work themselves straight; whereas, by giving alms you keep them permanently crooked. Build schoolhouses, pay teachers, give prizes, frame workmen's clubs, help them to help themselves, lend them your brains; but give them no money, except what you sink in such undertakings as the above."

In another place he declares, "Our object—i.e., self, rector, and some others—is to put a stop as much as possible to all benevolence;" and he adds, that the distress which has become chronic in Bethnal Green, Whitechapel, and Stepney, "has been aggravated more than all by the wholesale distribution of money by way of alms these last three or four years." Thus it is evident it was no rose-water philanthropist who descended upon Mile End in the stifling autumn weather in August 1867, when every soul of his class had fled to wholesome moors and hills, out of even the fresher and airier London of Belgravia. Instead of the Highlands or the fresh breadths of English home scenery, or the risks and delights of Switzerland, what a con-

trast were those dull and shut-up streets—hot, dusty, frowsy, and breathless—which, stretching as they do for miles of featureless brick and mortar, impress and appal the mind more with the terrible, dreary magnitude of London than all its crowds and all its palaces! To a young man so trained, to one accustomed, as a necessity of nature, to air and verdure and beauty, what a sacrifice!—and yet he made it spontaneously, eagerly, to please himself. While the few of his condition who were left at the other end of town, with parks and trees close by, and all that Art could do to make up for the temporary want of freedom, groaned and lamented themselves, he went cheerfully off to his little lodging, to all the mean surroundings which were so unfamiliar. He makes, we think, but one moan on this subject, and that only when the stifling autumn months were gone, and the compulsory deadness of winter might have made his prison a little more tolerable.

"My wits are getting blunted by the monotony and *ugliness* of this place. I can almost imagine—difficult as it is—the awful effect upon a human mind of never seeing anything but the meanest and vilest of men and man's works, and of complete exclusion from the sight of God and His works—a position in which the villager never is, and freedom from which ought to give him a higher moral starting-point than the Gibeonite of a large town."

The work he did in this strangely-chosen autumn refuge was manifold. At the very outset, the mere fact of his residence there exercised a certain passive influence upon the district. He speaks of "the remedial influence of the mere presence of a gentleman known to be on the alert" as of itself an inestimable advantage to the mass, not one of which, except here and there a

publican who had made a little money out of the general wretchedness, was at all above the level of that poverty which is scorned by health-inspectors and hustled by policemen. "Just now," he says, "I only teach a night-school, and do what in me lies in looking after the sick, keeping an eye upon nuisances and the like, seeing that the local authorities keep up to their work. I go to-morrow before the board at the workhouse to compel the removal to the infirmary of a man who ought to have been there already. I shall desire the sanitary inspector to put the Act against overcrowding into force, with regard to some houses in which there have been so many as eight and ten bodies occupying one room."

Thus it is clear that his mere neighbourhood was of use to the poor community. He did, however, more than this, making an attempt at religious training of the ignorant and careless men about him, of the success of which, or whether it dropped entirely on his leaving, we should have liked to have heard some details. We are not quite sure if it was as hopeful as the effort to improve their social condition. Mr Denison, like so many serious and able men of the present generation, had a strong idea that the clergy did not go to work in the best way to attract and engage the interest of men of the lower orders. "What is the use," he asks, "of telling people to come to church when they know of no rational reason why they should—when, if they go, they find themselves among people using forms of words which have never been explained to them; ceremonies performed which to them are entirely without meaning, sermons preached which as often as not have no meaning, or when they have a meaning, intelligible only to those who have studied

religion all their lives?" Acting upon this idea, he took this branch of reformation also into his own young and eager hands with a confidence which we cannot blame, and which was extremely natural, yet not, we think, founded either upon experience or reason. He describes his own intentions as follows:—

"Then there is to be—and this will be my great work, which if it succeeds will be the crown and glory of my labours—a meeting in the evenings, as often as they can be got together, of such of the grown men as I can collect. These I propose to take through a complete course of elementary Bible-teaching. Taking the Bible in my hand as the source, centre, and end of everything, I shall develop the whole scheme of religion, following the Bible narrative, and bringing in to my assistance any and every reinforcement I can draw from what little I know of human nature, from natural religion, and from secular history. Perhaps this may seem to you a presumptuous undertaking; and if I pretended to do anything like justice to the subject, so it would be. It will appear less formidable if you consider, not so much the feebleness of my light, as the blackness of their darkness whom I shall address."

This darling idea of the class to which Mr Denison belonged—the serious and liberal-minded young reformers, whose form of patriotism, if peculiar, is a high one, and their Christianity pure and genuine, if "viewy" and not very orthodox—he carried out with evident satisfaction and pleasure, beginning with an audience of twenty-five, all working-men and dock-labourers, and keeping up a steady class of about ten men, who met every week to hear him. We should be glad to have been informed if he continued this during all his residence in Mile End, and if any attempt was made after to keep it up. We cannot profess, however, for our own part,

much faith in such attempts. Experience shows that the men who really catch hold of and impress the careless and irreligious masses are not refined Oxford men with broad ideas and an enthusiasm for humanity, but those narrowest preachers of salvation and damnation who can appeal fearlessly to the strongest instincts of the primitive soul, and who offer to their disciples a choice between the most solemn of advantages and the most awful of penalties. No man has moved the lower classes since his time as Whitfield moved them, who had no broad views, nor knew anything about a lay-exposition of Christianity. This kind of impassioned religion, speaking the most technical and least comprehensible of language, and abandoning all attempt to harmonise itself with modern ways of thinking, or to demonstrate itself as built upon solid reason, has always been the most acceptable to the uneducated mind.

Mr Denison was not only determined to put down benevolence if he could, but he also opposed emigration, the other panacea which is supposed likely to cure us of our Poor. "All the evidence I have ever seen," he says, "goes to establish the fact, that the persons who thrive in the new country are just those who have thriven in the old—those, that is, who are endowed with a strong body, a vigorous mind, a resolute will, and industrious habits. How many such are there now starving in England?" This is no doubt perfectly true; and nothing can exceed the misery of those poor, helpless, hopeless emigrants, turned out upon an unfamiliar shore, weak, ignorant, and bewildered, after the delusions of their start and the weariness of their voyage, and finding that life depends upon hard work, skill, and

courage, as much on the other side of the Atlantic as on this. Still there are exceptions; and we cannot doubt that some classes of the poor would find an easier living in the new country than in the old. However, we cannot linger further on this gentle and subdued, but most interesting, picture of the work of a young man, as thoroughly meriting the old and somewhat hackneyed but noble title of Patriot as any Roman of them all. The courage which enabled him to make such a sacrifice, and the patience with which he conducted his work, are alike lessons which it would do us all good to learn—all the more that his life was no saintly stretch of self-devotion, and he was susceptible to the ambitions, and bound by the duties, of ordinary men. This makes it all the more a practical lesson to men absorbed in the occupations of ordinary life. In another point of view, however, the book is not quite so satisfactory; for the reader who has become interested in the man and his work cannot but pause to ask what was the effect upon the district of this fragment of noble effort. Did it repay the expenditure? did the brief heroism tell, as it ought to have told, upon those for whom the sacrifice was made? Has anything followed to reward the generous worker, or to encourage those who may follow his example? or have we but the example, the advice, the direction he has left us? None of these questions are at all answered in this too reticent little volume.

It is strange and touching to place beside this record of a short and exceptional existence the memories of a long and peaceful and active life contained in the '*Recollections of Sir Henry Holland.*'* The one

* *Recollections of Past Life*, by Sir Henry Holland, Bart. London: Longmans, Green.

book is as unlike the other as it is possible to imagine—the first brief, fragmentary, a record of half-matured opinions, never-executed plans, and one generous piece of exertion for the benefit of the poorest class in England; the other long, detailed, and distinct, the record of a successful and genial life, always prosperous, always full of occupation, interest, and amusement, and carrying beyond fourscore years the strong personal health and vigour which do so much to determine the course of life. To have seen almost every country under heaven which there is any special interest in visiting, from Iceland to Palestine, from Jamaica to Norway; to have been a witness of, or occasional actor in, all the great historical events of the last sixty years, from the wars of the Peninsula to the last civil war in America; to have known everybody who was worth knowing, and seen everything that was worth seeing, through all this long period, is a good-fortune possessed by very few. Wherever Sir Henry Holland went, he has gone with the best credentials; he has been in the very best circumstances for hearing and seeing what was most interesting. At Naples he “accompanied King Joachim (Murat) mounted on one of the royal horses to a review of his army when about to depart on his ill-fated march against the Austrians.” At Washington he lived “in the house of my excellent friend Mr Seward, and saw much of President Lincoln.” What a gap between the two scenes, and how different are the associations they call up! It is almost incredible that the same man, still lively, bright, and full of interest in everything, should convey to us his experiences of both. He was a visitor at the residence of the English commandant at Torres Vedras when its famous “lines” were holding armies at bay. He

was taken prisoner in Spain when wandering, a true adventurer, sketch-book in hand, through its honey-comb of wars and commotions in 1813. He was arrested again in Cracow in 1846, being found in the company of a Polish leader. He has been in Algeria with Marshal Bugeaud. In short, wherever there has been any stir in the world from 1812 to 1870, there Sir Henry Holland has been. And besides all this, he has been a great physician, a fashionable doctor, indispensable to the very life of many fine people, and keeping May Fair in order. Never could there have been a more active, a more energetic, a more full existence. What a contrast! Between the leisurely flow of the old man's book full of that universal experience, from which it is scarcely possible to keep back some slight flavour of perfectly amiable self-complacency, and the passionate brevity of the young life cut short almost before its experience had begun, there is such a world of difference as it is difficult to describe in words. The whole intermediate stage in which we live and have our being comes in between them. There is scarcely anything we can mention, we feel, but our elder friend will smile at us, and say, Yes, I was there! He is background to a whole century, whereas the other is but a scene in the drama, which passes like a shadow, the curtain rising and falling again, the action over almost before we knew that it had begun.

Dr Holland received his professional education chiefly at Edinburgh, where he was admitted into the brilliant society reigning there in the beginning of the century, and including not only the great lights of the ‘Edinburgh Review,’ but men still greater—with all of whom he had the good fortune to make acquaintance. When his

studies were over he went abroad, though the Peninsular war was at its height, and joining the army for some months, saw everything that was to be seen there; then he proceeded by the Italian coasts to Greece and Turkey, returning through Spain. With insatiable curiosity and energy he worked his way along, now studying wounds and now oracles, and roaming from the groves of Delphi to the bull-fights of Madrid without pause or interval; always managing at the same time, by friends or introductions or pure luck, to find himself among representative people, and more or less behind the scenes in respect to public affairs. After this he spent a year with the Princess of Wales as travelling physician; a position which brought him still more and more among fine people. In 1816 he began the practice of his profession in London—"with a fair augury of success speedily and completely fulfilled"—and henceforward the Doctor's animated and important life ran through a daily and yearly increasing circle of great names. Here the instinctive prudence of a man predestined to a long life comes in with that curious double aspect of cause and result which is often so visible in human affairs. He tells us that when he found his practice so rapidly augmenting, he considered himself justified "in defining more exactly my views for the future." Accordingly, he made two most wise resolutions—the first was to take two months of annual holiday; and the second, "to keep my practice within £5000 a-year." Happy doctor! how many of us would be delighted to have such a restriction in our power! The wisdom, however, of thus putting a limit upon work, which, the position once attained, may, we presume, be increased almost to any extent, by a man who makes haste

to be rich without considering the penalties involved, is full of the instinctive prudence and prescience of one born to outlive his century—a result which, at the same time, its moderation and self-denial no doubt largely contributed to bring about. Thus, instead of working all his faculties out by inordinate labour in the prime of life, the fortunate doctor kept to the steady level of exertion which he was capable of, and which brought him in as much as he thought necessary; and refreshed himself every year by absolute change of scene, and a long enough breathing-time to blow all cobwebs out of his brain, and keep him vigorous as a boy. There was extraordinary prudence and good sense in this; but let it not be supposed by any hasty critic that the men who work themselves out according to the melancholy fashion of the time, have but themselves to blame for the comparison between their haggard energy and the smooth and prosperous activity of such a man as Sir Henry Holland. He himself is perfectly ready to acknowledge that he had an admirable start, no burdens or struggles to embarrass him, and the delightful support of ancestral property to fall back upon; conditions which would tell mightily in any man's favour, and which gave to this thoroughly fortunate man, to begin with, that success which succeeds better than anything else in the world. The poor souls, however, who buy their fortune by blood and tears, and a struggle such as only the exceptionally gifted survive, have one slight compensation at least. Prosperity is monotonous; very delightful to the possessor, but not so interesting to other people. The narrative of continued and unbroken success very soon palls upon the reader, and to give any story a real human interest, struggle and sorrow must come in.

Dr Holland's life, however, was as virtuous as it was prosperous. In the very height of his labours, when his professional engagements were most engrossing, he tells us that he "allotted three days each week to Greek and Latin reading, under the resolution never to let the day pass wholly without it, even though but ten minutes could be kept free from other business." These ten minutes of leisure were for a man of his occupations found chiefly in the intervals between one patient's house and another; and he adds, "carrying Latin and Greek books with me in my carriage till my eyes refused the latter, I have found no difficulty in passing at once from the sorrows of Iphigenia and Dido to the ailments and complaints of a sick-room in Grosvenor Square; and even a genial connection in coming fresh from Horace, Catullus, or Lucretius, to the men of wit or learning with whom as patients I have been so often associated." This is an admirable habit, and one which no doubt would enable men to keep up their knowledge of all literature in a way infinitely valuable so far as the literature itself is concerned; but this too requires special gifts and constitution of mind. It is one of the instinctive habits of a long life. Much time, much leisure, and no troublous thoughts to speak of which can intrude themselves between the calm reader and his Lucretius, are indispensable to this kind of study.

Sir Henry gives us a perfect crowd of sketches of his distinguished contemporaries. There is scarcely one name wanting from the list which is important enough to win a place in any national portrait gallery; and it would almost seem that not to know Sir Henry Holland must have been, from 1830 downwards, a very clear way of arguing yourself unknown. The list is too long to go over, and the sketches are very brief

and not particularly striking. It would have required, indeed, a very great and varied power to have done justice to so many; and if we may venture to say so, the best quality they have is to remind us of that admirable and delightful gentleman Mr Brooke, whom George Eliot has lately introduced to our knowledge. Perhaps the most worth noting of these sketches are the portraits of two ladies to whom a little more than the usual space is allotted, and who were women remarkable enough in their very different ways to make an impression upon any looker-on—Madame de Staël and Lady Holland. We give these slight studies as the best specimens we can select of this comfortable, garrulous, pleasant book:—

"I first met her at a great dinner at Bridgewater House; whence the party adjourned in the evening to the opening of the British Gallery, of which our host, the Marquis of Stafford, was then President. The accident of her taking my arm during our stay in the crowded gallery made me a witness of the anxious interest to see and hear her which prevailed at the time. It also brought me immediately several invitations to meet her in society, from persons whom I had not known before. These things are characteristic, it must be owned, of what may be called foibles, as well as features, of London life. Time has done little since to alter them.

"I saw much afterward of Madame de Staël at her own house in Argyll Street, in those literary and political circles which she gathered round her, and where she declaimed or argued with all who could meet her with her own weapons and in her own language. Sir J. Mackintosh was the most frequent and expert of these intellectual combatants; and it was the combat most congenial to his own tastes. In some points there was a certain intellectual likeness between them; such as the power of putting an argument into its most pithy shape—what may be called a *wit of speech*, apart from that wit of *humour*, to which neither of them

could lay much claim. Frequently, too, I used to sit alone with Madame de Staël at her fireside, to which she clung closely in the wintry cold of the spring of 1814. Her conversation, always earnest and eloquent, often fell upon my recent travels in the East. She had formed at this time the scheme of a work on the Crusades, fashioned upon the plan of Fénelon's '*Télémaque*.' The outline of this she put in detail before me, seeking for such suggestions as I might be able to offer. I was obliged to confess my inability to render any aid worth having; explaining to her that an intimacy with Turks and Turkish Pashas of the present day, such as mine was, would furnish few hints for the picture of Saladin, or of the Seljuk chiefs and warriors of that more romantic age. Her scheme never ripened into any reality.

"One of the latest occasions of my meeting Madame de Staël was at a dinner at Sir Samuel Romilly's, well marked in my memory by the intelligence being received, while we were yet at table, of the entry of the Allied armies into Paris. Her emotion was great and ardently expressed, though leaving it somewhat doubtful whether pleasure or pain predominated. Her life had borne this mingled character throughout. In a single sentence she thus denotes her mental temperament: '*Calme et animé; ce qu'il faut être, et ce que je ne suis pas*.' Another trait she discloses, speaking of *les revenants*: '*Je n'y crois pas, mais je les crains*.' She measured herself well in these self-avowals, to which another trait, less avowed, might perhaps have been added. From my own observation as well as that of others, I was led to believe that she would willingly have surrendered something of her intellectual fame for a little more of personal beauty. She was ever curiously demonstrative of her arms, as the feature which best satisfied this aspiration. A bit of paper often in her hand, and sedulously twisted during her eager conversation, might be a casual trick of habit, though there were some who gave it a more malicious interpretation.

"I am not prone to extol the past at the expense of the present, but I nevertheless must state my feeling that

nothing in London life has yet replaced what was the habitual society of Holland House. The London season, as it is called, abounds in good dinners and good company, and these dinners take high rank among our social usages; but at Holland House (itself a classical spot) there met almost daily, during a series of years, round a luxurious table, guests eminent in such various ways that their mere conjunction stamped its character on the society. English and foreign ministers and diplomatists, men of learning and of science, historians, poets, artists, and wits, were so skilfully commingled as to make it sure that none but a master-hand could have accomplished the result.

"The master-hand here was that of the mistress, Lady Holland, a remarkable woman in every way, well remembered by all who knew her, difficult to describe to those who did not. Supreme in her own mansion and family, she exercised a singular and seemingly capricious tyranny even over guests of the highest rank and position. Capricious it seemed, but there was, in reality, *intention* in all she did; and this intention was the maintenance of power, which she gained and strenuously used, though not without discretion in fixing its limits. No one knew better when to change her mood, and to soothe by kind and flattering words the provocation she had just given, and was very apt to give. In this latter case, indeed, she was aided by a native generosity of mind which never failed to show itself in kindness where kindness was wanted. In my long and intimate knowledge of Lady Holland, I never knew her desert an old friend, whatever his condition might be. Many things, seemingly wilful and incongruous in her, might be explained through this happier quality of mind blended with that love of power which, fostered by various circumstances, pervaded every part of her life. The influence she exercised was doubtless aided by large general reading, of which she made sedulous and skilful use. Her management of conversation at the dinner-table—sometimes arbitrary and in rude arrest of others, sometimes courteously inviting the subject—furnished a study in itself. Every guest felt her presence, and

generally more or less succumbed to it. She was acute in distinguishing between real and false merit, and merciless in her treatment of the latter. Not a woman of wit in words, she had what might well be called consummate practical wit in all her relations to society. Once only, and that very late in life, she spoke to me of the labour she underwent in maintaining the position thus acquired. The information was not necessary. My own observation had already made me well but silently aware of it.

"My personal relations to Holland House, fostered by much previous intercourse in Italy, were of the most agreeable kind from the beginning, and the lapse of time in no way altered them. Despite Lady Holland's imperious rule in all matters of society, I was a guest almost at my own bidding, and often passed the night at this picturesque old mansion, abounding in so many recollections of men and times. My profession, doubtless, served in some degree to maintain this intimacy. My politics, never much more than neutral, and rather tending to the other side, had certainly nothing to do with it. The political visitors to Holland House were, of course, almost exclusively of the Whig party; though it was always a matter of rejoicing to Lady Holland when she could catch a stray Tory to mingle with them. But political party was better leavened by the admixture of literary men and eminent foreigners, who, under her invitation, found place at this table. Lord Holland himself came to it each day wholly ignorant whom he was to find there; but greeting all alike with his genial smile, and animating all by the charm of his conversation, and by a flow and felicity of anecdote peculiar to himself, the effect heightened by his own enjoyment of it. He sat always at a corner of the dinner-table, to which I doubt whether he ever himself ventured to invite a guest."

The following anecdote is not without a gentle touch of humour. Sir Henry has been giving an account of some of the regions unknown to the ordinary traveller into which he had wandered:—

"The Gulf of Cattero was the chief

scene of an insurrection against the Christian rule, breaking out just after my visit to this wonderful spot three years ago. By an odd coincidence, my journey of the next year brought me to the Red River but a few weeks before the insurrection which threatened the existence of this remote member of our colonial empire. Happening to mention this to Mr Gladstone, he commented upon it by the very appropriate question, 'Pray, Sir Henry, may I ask what is your direction of travel this year?' I had not then fixed it: but it did turn out to be Jamaica!"

And here is another which affords a pleasant glimpse of the extraordinary constitutional energy of the cheerful and genial old man:—

"A frequent source of amusement to myself is my incapacity for walking slowly: and the sort of impulsion I even now feel (*à l'âge* 83) to pass those immediately before me in the street, and to take the diagonal instead of two sides of a square wherever this is the alternative. I mentioned the latter circumstance to my excellent friend Mr Richmond, when he was finishing a crayon portrait of me. 'You ought,' he said, 'to have told me this before.' When I cease to take the diagonal, often a dirty one, instead of the side pavements, I shall consider that I have gone a step downwards in the path of life."

The reader, we do not doubt, will join heartily in the hope that it may be a long time before this downward step is taken. That a life so prosperous, so happy, so well occupied and employed, should need to end at all, is a thought which is almost more disagreeable to the imagination than it is to realise that fading away into the celestial dimness of a young soul newly alighted upon earth, transitory, visionary, impatient of evil, like that of Edward Denison. We cannot but return to the strange completeness of the contrast between them. The one making a rush through life, snatching as he

passed some present for his fellow-creatures, nothing for himself; for why should he try to grasp anything for himself when destiny led him to worlds apart and different? The other jogging briskly along, with no hurry or impetuosity, and an endless roll of years before him in which to spend and to enjoy all that he gathered on his varied and cheerful path.

From this cheerful old man's story of a happy and prosperous life we turn to another, like it in some particulars, but in others very unlike—the recently-published memoir, by the elder of the two brothers, of William and Robert Chambers.* This book has an interest of a very much deeper and more engrossing kind than can be called forth by any record of peaceful prosperity, and yet both the men therein chronicled were prosperous in the fullest sense of the word, rich, respected, and respectable, holding a high and well-won place in the estimation of their countrymen, and well known among the men of their generation. But it is not their period of honour and wealth which most charms the reader. These advantages which it is so delightful to possess are wonderfully alike, whosoever's are the lucky hands they fall into. But the story of the way in which William and Robert Chambers fought their way to fortune is peculiar to themselves, and full of the liveliest interest. So far as art and literature are concerned, there can be no doubt that the benediction of the Gospel is most literally true, and that it is the poor, the struggling, and the sorrowful who are the blessed. No story could be more absorbing than the story of these two boys, thrown upon their own exertions at the

tenderest age, and fighting on, steadily, frugally, courageously, with unbounded bravery and self-control, into those regions of wealth, luxury, and notability which, though success and prosperity are necessary to the completeness of the narrative, are not so interesting to the reader. The height attained may not be heroic, but the struggle towards it is heroic and exciting as any drama. The great success of '*Chambers's Journal*,' most virtuous and respectable of periodicals, is indeed such a success as any man might be proud of; but the sight of the two lads in Leith Walk, with their little bookstalls, their noble, virtuous poverty, never imbittered by any sense of wrong, natural, cheerful, open to all good and pleasant influences, does the very heart good to behold. All the earlier part of the narrative is most simply and charmingly told; and though the story of the elder takes fully more room in it than that of the younger, Mr William Chambers invariably subordinates his own claim upon our attention to that of the more "delicately organised," more literary brother, whose memoir he is writing. How many of the readers of this most interesting little book will remember that brother, sunning himself in his old age upon the pleasant Scores at St Andrews, or daundering slowly over the bright Links, one of the prettiest and brightest scenes of Scottish out-of-door life! The great white rollers of the German Ocean thundering in upon the broad sands, yet with no wrath in them or menace, only a gentle protestation of power, which that great sunlit stretch of blue sea—blue as the Mediterranean, and as bright—does its best to hide from us; the green, close turf, like velvet, under the foot; the high

* *Memoir of Robert Chambers, with autobiographic reminiscences, by William Chambers.* W. & R. Chambers, Edinburgh: 1872.

bents, with their whin-bushes, casting up broken heaps of green and yellow to shelter those miles of undulating lawn from sand and sea; the brisk parties coming and going, with here and there a red-coated player to give colour to the scene, attended by their little groups of cadies with sheafs of golfing-clubs; the triangular corner, bright as a flower-bed with ladies' dresses, where wives and daughters pursue a gentle game in emulation and encouragement of the heroes below; and the friendly Club close by, where everybody knows everybody, where the droll language of golf has its home and metropolis,—never was a prettier scene. The sun blazes upon it sometimes all day long, but never untempered by brisk sea-breezes, salt and invigorating; and though it is Scotland, the soft summer haze of the morning, the warm hush of noonday, and the glorious sunsets which arrange themselves over the Forfar hills, do not yield in beauty to any atmospheric vicissitudes we know. To be sure, there is another side to the picture, when the sea is lead, with ominous muddy-white edges, keeping up a hoarse internal moaning that means mischief; when the sky is lead, weighing down upon links and sand, and heart and soul; when even the red coats scarcely lend cheerfulness to the wide grey landscape; when the Ladies' Links are bare and vacant, with perhaps but one persevering pair of strong-minded maidens in grey or brown, practising for the grand medal when the less heroic are out of the way. Such is sometimes the aspect of St Andrews, no doubt; but then we have seen the Bay of Naples growl like the German Ocean, and grow into lead, and veil itself in fogs and tempest; we have seen Vesuvius as snowy and bleak as one of the Grampians. And never did rich old Scotsman in the

evening of his laborious days choose better for himself than did Robert Chambers, kindly, gentle, genial old soul, when he established himself upon the Scores, in the light of many a splendid sunset, with the broad stretch of waters before him and the friendly town behind, to accomplish there his serene sunset-ting too.

Pardon, gentle Southern reader, for this digression! The delights of the East Neuk of Fife might not perhaps strike all strangers; but we, who are to the manner born, cannot be expected to pass them over without a momentary rhapsody. It is not, however, with old Robert Chambers, a patriarch among his many grandchildren on the sunny Scores, but with young Robert Chambers, a poor and struggling boy, that we ought to concern ourselves chiefly. The two brothers were born with the century—William in 1800, Robert in 1802—in modest and humble comfort, in the little town of Peebles, which is here accordingly placed before us, all fresh and quaint and old-fashioned, as it existed at that period in their joint recollection. The quietest slumbrous little town, situated “among beautiful pastoral hills with a singularly pure atmosphere,” with silvery Tweed running by all those years and ages, clear and sweet over its pebbles, murmuring an accompaniment to all the gentle, drowsy, homely life. “Paris, a’thing considered, is a wonderful place,” said one delightful townsman, who had visited that big Babylon, “but still Peebles for plesure!” Here is a sketch of the little place, as distinct in colour and atmosphere as it is true to nature.

“There was an old and a new town in Peebles—each of them a single street, or little more; and as even the new town had an antique look, it may be inferred that the old looked old in-

deed. It was indeed chiefly composed of thatched cottages, occupied by weavers and labouring people—a primitive race of homely aspect, in many instances eking out a scanty subsistence by having a cow on the town common, or cultivating a *rig* of potatoes in the fields close to the town. Rows of porridge *luggies* (small wooden vessels) were to be seen cooling on window-soles; a smell of peat-smoke pervaded the place; the click of the shuttle was everywhere heard during the day; and in the evening, the grey old men came out in their Kilmarnock night-caps, and talked of Bonaparte on the stone seats beside their doors. The platters used in those humble dwellings were all of wood, and the spoons of horn; knives and forks rather rare articles. The house was generally divided into two apartments by a couple of *box-beds*, placed end to end—a bad style of bed prevalent in cottages all over Scotland; they were so close as almost to stifle the inmates. Among these humble people, all costumes, customs, and ways of living smacked of old times. You would see a venerable patriarch making his way to church on Sunday, with a long-backed, swing-tailed, liquid-blue coat of the style of George II., which was probably his marriage-coat, and half a century old. His head-gear was a broad-brimmed blue-bonnet. The old women came out on the same occasions in red scarfs, called cardinals, and white *mutches* (caps), bound by a black ribbon, with the grey hair folded back on the forehead. There was a great deal of drugget and huckaback and serge in that old world, and very little cotton. One almost might think he saw the humbler Scotch people of the seventeenth century before his eyes.”

The minister still wore a cocked-hat when the two Chamberses were children at Peebles, and there existed in the place at least one old Cameronian prophet still mourning over the breach of the Solemn League and Covenant. “Ye’re muckle pleased wi’ that bairn, woman,” cried this grim personage, coming up one summer evening to the mother of William and Robert, as she stood at her own door, unsus-

pecting, with her baby in her arms. “If the French come, what will ye do with him? But you should rather pray that they may come. You should pray for judgments, woman, judgments on a sinfu’ land. Pray that the Lord would pour out the vials of His wrath upon us—it would be for our good.” In the same town, however, where this disciple of the Old Light continued to flourish, public notices were proclaimed in the streets “by tuck of drum” by an old man with a heroic story, called Drummer Will; and the original of Davie Gellatley made songs about the neighbours, and sang them with wild sweetness; and gaberlunzies like Edie Ochiltree, full of song and story, came and went, received like friends in the humble cheerful houses where books were more known than newspapers, and which were little affected by the great events of the present; and, strangest of all, French prisoners filled up all the spare nooks, and played Molière in pure Parisian to the puzzled townsfolks! Here is another delightful sketch of the quaint little place:—

“Among that considerable part of the population who lived down closes and in old thatched cottages, news circulated at third or fourth hand, and was merged in conversation on religious or other topics. My brother and I derived much enjoyment, not to say instruction, from the singing of old ballads, and the telling of legendary stories, by a kind old female relative, the wife of a decayed tradesman, who dwelt in one of the ancient closes. At her humble fireside, under the canopy of a huge chimney, where her half-blind and superannuated husband sat dozing in a chair, the battle of Corunna and other prevailing news was strangely mingled with disquisitions on the Jewish wars. The source of this interesting conversation was a well-worn copy of L’Estrange’s translation of ‘Josephus,’ a small folio of date 1720. The envied possessor of the work was

Tam Fleck, 'a flichty chield,' as he was considered, who, not particularly steady at his legitimate employment, struck out a sort of profession of going about in the evenings with his Josephus, which he read as the current news: the only light that he had for doing so being usually that imparted by the flickering blaze of a piece of parrot-coal. It was his practice not to read more than from two to three pages at a time, interlarded with sagacious remarks of his own by way of footnotes, and in this way he sustained an extraordinary interest in the narrative. Retailing the matter with great equability in different households, Tam kept all at the same point of information, and wound them up with a corresponding anxiety as to the issue of some moving event in Hebrew annals. Although in this way he went through a course of Josephus yearly, the novelty somehow never seemed to wear off.

"Weel, Tam, what's the news the nicht?" would old Geordie Murray say, as Tam entered with his Josephus under his arm, and seated himself at the family fireside.

"Bad news, bad news," replied Tam; "Titus has begun to besiege Jerusalem—it's gaun to be a terrible business:" and then he opened his budget of intelligence, to which all paid the most reverential attention. The protracted and severe famine which was endured by the besieged Jews was a theme which kept several families in a state of agony for a week; and when Tam in his readings came to the final conflict and destruction of the city by the Roman general, there was a perfect paroxysm of horror. At such *séances* my brother and I were delighted listeners. All honour to the memory of Tam Fleck."

Besides these sources of information, there was in the house of the Chamberses a copy of the 'Encyclopædia Britannica,' acquired at some moment of unusual wealth by their father. This book was so cumbersome that it had been placed in a chest and laid up in a garret. "Roaming about there one day," says Robert Chambers himself, "in that morning of intellectual curiosity, I lighted upon the stored book, and

from that time forwards all my spare time was spent beside the chest. It was a new world to me. I felt a profound thankfulness that such a convenient collection of human knowledge existed, and that here it was spread out like a convenient table before me. What the gift of a whole toyshop was to other children this book was to me. I plunged into it—I roamed through it like a bee; I hardly could be patient enough to read any one article while so many others remained to be looked into." Boys with this intellectual ardour are not difficult to educate, and the education received by the brothers seems to have been a very tolerable one, though, like all self-made men, they lament the absence of that routine instruction which probably would not have been half so effectual. They attended first the burgh school, corresponding to the parish school in a country parish, where all the juvenile population assembled together, girls and boys, the teacher being "the author of a popular treatise on arithmetic;" and afterwards the grammar school of Peebles, a superior institution, where even William, who was less studious than his brother, acquired a little Latin. Robert made further progress, and went on with his classical studies after the family, much reduced in circumstances, had removed to Edinburgh, where they went in 1813. Here they lived "up a stair" in West Nicolson Street, a locality in which many families belonging to their own county and neighbourhood lived, and where they speedily found friends. In these much-divided houses was to be found great variety of human life, and all of a struggling kind; poor folk painfully keeping the wolf from their doors, and preserving such remnants of appearance in the face of the world

as was possible. "I can recollect some of these," says Mr William Chambers. "Widows of decayed tradesmen, who were moving heaven and earth to get their sons into hospitals, and their daughters taught to be governesses. Teachers in the decline of life, like poor Picken, endeavouring to draw a subsistence from the fees of most difficult-to-be-procured pupils. Licensed preachers, to whom fate had not assigned a kirk, and who after years of pinning now made a livelihood by preparing young men for university degrees. Genteel unmarried women, left destitute by improvident fathers, who contrived to maintain themselves by colouring maps, or by sewing fine needlework for the Repository. . . . To my father and mother, these persons with their varied experience could furnish hints as to how petty difficulties incidental to their condition could be overcome. One or two things they seem to have made their special study. They knew the proper ways of applying for situations in public offices, and what expedients could be attempted to elude the payment of rates and taxes."

This is a curious little indication of a class not high enough or low enough to secure general notice, with few picturesque circumstances about it, and many sordid ones, yet not without the pathetic interest of much sorrow, and a hard struggle often very courageously borne. The boys, however, disengaged themselves from the monotonous privacy of this class, and plunged into the open air and visible effort of one a shade lower by their independent outset in life. William became an apprentice to a bookseller at four shillings a-week, out of which, when the family went to Joppa (not the Scriptural town, but a dreary little place between Edinburgh and Musselburgh), he managed to save some-

thing besides maintaining himself—surely one of the greatest feats of frugality on record. His lodgings—that is to say, bed, cooking, and the permission to sit by his landlady's kitchen fire of nights—cost him eighteenpence, and he managed to live on one-and-ninepence! "I cannot remember entertaining the slightest despondency on the subject," he says; and thus this brave boy relieved his family of the cost of his maintenance at the age of fourteen. It may be supposed the lodgings were not very fine. The bed had often to be shared with another, and the kitchen fire was very small; but boys whose hearts are stout enough to live on four shillings a-week by way of saving an extra anxiety to father and mother, have, Heaven bless them! a stock of internal warmth to keep them going. The lad living in this proud and stern independence was worked at the same time to the utmost verge of his powers. The bookseller, his master, kept a circulating library, and was also agent for a State lottery. Thus the early life of a man associated with all kinds of virtuous instruction to the people upon all manner of political economies, links itself to one of the ancient follies which fly in the face of all laws. "Frequently," he says, "I was sent on my travels with as many as three hundred letters, sorted and tied up in the manner of a postman." However, the valiant lad lost neither heart nor hope. He trudged on and on through the windings of the old town, "up dozens of long stairs, over miles of thoroughfares," with a buzz of youthful thoughts in his mind and the determination of a hero in his soul. Over the doorway of an old house he read as he went and came the record of experience left by some older fighter in life's rude battle, and took cheer from the words, "He that tholes overcomes."

"I made up my mind," he says, "to *thole*." Does some benighted Southerner ask what the word means? Does it not explain itself? To *thole*, to *bear*, to endure—words which carry within them some incipient thrill already of the note of victory.

We cannot pause to note all the curious experiences he had in this laborious moment; but we may quote the manner in which this bookseller's apprentice amused himself. "The mornings in summer, when light cost nothing, were my chief reliance," he tells us. "Fatigued with trudging about, I was not naturally inclined to rise, but on this and some other points I overruled the will, and forced myself to get up at five o'clock and have a spell at reading. . . . In this way I made some progress in French, with the pronunciation of which I was already familiar from the speech of the French prisoners of war in Peebles. I likewise dipped into several books of solid worth, such as Smith's 'Wealth of Nations,' Locke's 'Human Understanding,' Paley's 'Moral Philosophy,' and Blair's 'Belles Lettres,' fixing the leading facts and theories in my memory by a note-book for the purpose." The boys also made experiments in chemistry, having found a hospitable old pair who permitted this pursuit; and constructed a cylindrical electrifying machine, and produced coal-gas in a blacking-bottle, with other such delightful combinations of science and amusement. Do the errand-boys who bring our parcels, the deliverers of circulars, the lads from the circulating libraries, occupy their leisure moments in this way now? And on Saturday nights the boys went off "between nine and ten o'clock, in all states of the weather, winter and summer, . . . past Holyrood, across the King's Park by Muschat's Cairn," a dreary walk,

towards dreary little Joppa on the sea-shore, where the Salt-pans fumed, and life was if possible more hopeless than in the West Port. Here they went to Inveresk Church, or sometimes as far as Dalkeith to visit some relatives.

"There was an immense charm in these occasional Sabbath-day walks to Dalkeith, in which I usually carried a French New Testament in my pocket for lingual exercise. The sunshine, the calm that prevailed, the fresh air, the singing of birds, the green leafy trees, and the blossoming wild-flowers by the wayside, all filled my heart with gladness, for they renewed my recollections of the country. The fields, stuck about with coal-pits, at which the gin-horses had intermitted their accustomed toil, were not such pretty fields as I had seen in Tweedside; still they were environed with hedgerows, and formed a pleasing contrast to the huge rows of dingy buildings among which I pursued my ordinary employment. As a boy I had passionately cultivated flowers in a little garden assigned to me, and now rejoiced to see a few growing by the side of the pathway. The Mid-Lothian primroses, I imagined—considering the neighbourhood of the coal-pits—had not the freshness and bloom of the primroses which I had gathered in the woods and dales at Neidpath; but still they were primroses, and as the best within reach, I plucked and carried home a handful as a gift to my mother in her dreary residence at the Pans, and was pleased to see her put them in a glass with a little water, to preserve as a souvenir of my weekly visit."

We have spent so much time upon this charming beginning that we cannot dwell upon the wonderful commencement of business, which is as exciting as a ballad. How Robert set up at sixteen with the little library of the family for his stock-in-trade, his own school-books being added to fill up a little more space—"the whole, if ranged on a shelf, would occupy about twelve feet, with perhaps a foot

additional by including Horace and the other school-books ;" how from the moment of that beginning he never costs his family a sixpence, and soon was in a position to aid them. How William, without even this aid, on the same shady side of Leith Walk, set up another book-stall as soon as his apprenticeship was over, with his pound's worth of books, which a wise traveller from London allowed him to have on credit ; how, to beguile the tedium of wet days, when nothing could be sold, he began to print, and then to write in order to print ; and how at length, by slow degrees, the two bookstalls grew into a great shop, and the two boys into well-known men,—we have not space to tell. But it is long since we have read a story so simple, so unexaggerated, and so full of interest. That the struggle was well rewarded, and that success brought at once comfort and honour in its train, the reader learns with pleasure ; but the struggle is better even than the wealth ; and the period which Mr Chambers playfully and touchingly calls the Dark Ages, will be, he may be certain, the finest feather in his cap—the Golden Age—of which his relations will always have reason to be proud.

Robert Chambers was not a great, but he was a most industrious and painstaking, writer ; and there can be little doubt that his contributions to the *Journal*, which were uninterrupted for a long series of years, did more than anything else to secure its success. These contributions were always marked by good sense and genial feeling. His '*Memoirs of the Rebellion of 1745*' is of higher pretensions, and is, we think, by much the best popular history of that singular epoch ; and his '*Life of Burns*' is a very honest, true, and good work ; while the '*Traditions of Edinburgh*,' which was one of his earlier productions,

secured the interest of Scott, one of the best, if certainly the kindest, of judges. We are tempted to make one small personal contribution to the records of his modest fame, in the shape of a ballad, the favourite of our own youth, and which we remember, with all the vivacity of childish impression, to have found in a huge, dusty, paper-covered volume in some odd corner of our nursery, heaven knows how many years ago, and to have crooned ever after with vague childish enjoyment of its mixture of humour and pathos. '*Chambers's Journal*,' judging by this recollection, must have been at least six times as big then as now ; and here is the ballad of Young Randal, our own most early grateful association with Robert Chambers's name :—

" Oh Randal was a bonnie lad when he
gaed awa'—
A bonnie, bonnie lad was he when he gaed
awa'.

'Twas in the sixteenth hunder year of
grace and thretty-twa,
That Randal, the Laird's youngest son,
gaed awa'.

'Twas a' to seek his fortune in the Hie
Germanie,
To fight the foreign loons in the Hie Ger-
manie,
That he left his father's tower o' sweet
Willanslee,
And mony wae friends in the north coun-
trie.

He left his mother in her bower, his father
in the ha',
His brother at the outer yett, but and his
sisters twa,
And his bonnie cousin Jean, that looked
ower the castle wa',
And mair than a' the lave let the tears
doun fa'.

Oh when will you be back again ? so kindly
did she speer ;
Oh when will you be back again, my hinny
and my dear ?
Whenever I can win eneuch o' the Spanish
gear,
To dress you in pearlins and silks, my
dear.

Oh Randal's hair was coal-black when he
gaed awa',
Oh Randal's cheeks were roses red when he
gaed awa';
And in his bonnie e'e a spark glinted high,
Like the merrie, merrie lark in the morn-
ing sky.

Oh Randal was an alter't man when he
cam' hame—
A sair alter't man was he when he cam'
hame,
With a ribbon at his breest and a Sir at
his name,
And grey, grey cheeks—oh, Randal came
hame!

He looted at the gate and he rispit wi' the
ring,
And doun came a lady to see him come in;
And after the lady came bairns fifteen—
Oh can this muckle wife be my true-love
Jean?

Whatna stour carle is this, quo' the dame,
Sae gruff and sae grand and sae feckless
and lame!
I pray you, fair madam, are ye bonnie
Jeanie Graeme?
In truth, quo' the lady, sweet sir, the very
same.

He turned him about with a tear in his
e'e,
And a heart as sair as heart could be;
He lap on his horse, and awa' did wildly
flee,
And never mair came back again to sweet
Willanalee.

Oh dool on the puirith o' this countrie,
And dool on the wars o' the Hie Germanie,
And dool on the love that forgetful can be,
For they've broke the bravest heart in the
haill countrie."

Farewell, brave lads, the credit of
your class and country! Farewell,
prosperous and gentle and kind old
man! After having done so well
for himself, and receiving so much
pleasant reward for his exertions,
there is but one thing we could have
wished to Robert Chambers—a sun-
nier spot to rest in than that gloomy
corner of old St Rule's, where, with-
in sound of the sea, and amid the
ancient monuments he loved, it was,
we are informed, his own choice
to lie.

From shady Leith Walk and
sunny St Andrews we want more
than seven-leagued boots to reach
at one stride those vast far-distant
plains, lost in the mysteries of anti-
quity, yet novel and fresh as the
newest of worlds, to which Mr
Ralston introduces us in his book
about Russian songs.* Everything
is new to us in these great breadths
of distant country, where an un-
known people, harmonious, incom-
prehensible, sets its old immemorial
life to music, and keeps living on
to the same accompaniment, even
through these modern days. The
ballad stage has altogether passed
for ourselves, and nobody among us
has been wise enough to imagine
that the primitive and uneducated
mind is much the same in all ages,
and that even in Whitechapel it is
possible that the old heroic stories
which once English peasants loved,
might answer better than penny-
readings if there was any minstrel
to tell them. The only possible point
of contact, however, which we have
personally with that most attractive
and earliest school of literature, is
the rare encounter, somewhat vague
and fabulous, of a Gaelic-speaking
sportsman with some old Allan
Bane among the Highland hills—
a doubtful satisfaction, since it is
never quite clear to us whether the
old piper is to be trusted, or if he is
merely sounding the depths of gul-
libility in the modern mind. But
in Russia song is the very soul of
the people. It accompanies them
everywhere, in the woods and in the
fields, as well as in the primitive
rustic assemblies common to them
as to all races, but living and real
amongst that strange, half-civilised,
and mysterious people, while dead
or galvanised into merely ficti-
tious life with us. Mr Ralston
is not one of those travellers who

* The Songs of the Russian People. By W. R. S. Ralston. London: 1872.

come back from a six weeks' tour, briskly confident of everything, and ready to give us an exhaustive account and description of an unknown race. He has laboured for years with conscientious diligence and painstaking to make himself master of the language and literature, which we believe no man in England is so well qualified to expound to us; and nothing can be more fresh, more graphic and full of interest, than the scenes he sets before us in his new work, so unlike anything known to us, and so unquestionably living and real. Russia has all the attraction of almost virgin soil; and it has a double attraction in its novelty from the ancientness of everything that is so fresh and young to us. Though we never heard of them before, there is nothing of this vulgar present in the customs, the strange life, the wild and sweet music of that vast and heretofore silent country. To-day has nothing to do with this new-discovered empire; nor even our modern yesterday of the historical past which we make so much of. The Russian peasant makes no account of the frivolous modernising of our middle ages. He stretches back far beyond all that to those dim days when valour and strength came from the East, as well as instruction and wisdom—to the mysterious sources of all knowledge, the morning lands, whence spring all the prophets, and, so far as Russia is concerned, the heroes too. He mounts up to the very sources of mythology, to fables older than Greece, to that high strain of Oriental poetry which is the source of all. And when we remember that this poetry, drawn from so high and primary a fountain, mixes still with all his quaint and primitive life, on this dead level of the nineteenth century, the reader will be able to form an idea of the kind of novel

pleasure which awaits him in Mr Ralston's book. The author is extremely modest about his own valuable labours, quaintly declaring that it is his "chief aim" to render this treasure of poetry and primitive life "available to such students of mythology and folk-lore as may happen not to read Russian;" but the reader who is neither, will, or we mistake his quality, be but too happy to find a volume so fresh and full of life upon his table. For our own poor part we avow that mythology moves us little, but that we find Svyatagor and his compeers delightful companions; and that even more charming than Svyatagor are the groups that listen to the tales of his exploits, and the minstrels who sing them. Here, for instance, is a sketch of the way in which an enterprising Russian collector, Ruibnikof by name, collected various Builfnas or heroic ballads, which had dropped out of the recollection of the cultivated classes into the great peasant world which lies below. This gentleman found some little difficulty at first in his labours; finding, for instance, that at the great fair of Shungsk, which he visited with this intention, the *Kaliki* or blind minstrels who had been in the habit of sitting by the churchyard and singing songs to all listeners, had been driven away some years previously by the police. It is pleasant to know that the lover of literature, who was strengthened by a Government commission, had interest enough to procure the restitution of the blind singers, who, however, were only partially satisfactory to him, as their songs were entirely religious, and they knew no Builfnas. The district was Old-Ritualist, Puritan, and cared not for romance; and M. Ruibnikof had to push his inquiries further than even Shungsk, wherever that curious compound of consonants may be.

"One fresh May morning, having donned the dress of the common people, Ruibnikof went down to the quay at Petrozavodsk, and began to look for a boat to take him to the other side of Lake Onega. The ice had scarcely had time to thaw, but boats had already begun to arrive from different parts of the lake, laden with butter, eggs, and meal, and manned by peasants who gave their services as rowers in return for a free passage. There was, however, only one boat from that part of the shore to which he wished to go. So in it, although it could offer but small accommodation, he was obliged to start. The boat left the quay at night, rowed by three men and a woman, but had not got far on its way when a strong head-wind arose; and about six o'clock in the morning the weary rowers were glad to take refuge under the lee of a desolate little island, about eight miles from Petrozavodsk. Ruibnikof landed, and walked to a small hut intended for the benefit of weather-bound mariners; but it was full of peasants, for several other boats had been forced to take shelter from the storm, so he made himself some tea at a wood-fire which was burning outside, and then lay down to sleep on the bare ground.

"Before long he was awakened by strange sounds. Some one was singing beside the fire. He had heard many songs, but never such a one as that to which he was now listening. 'Lively, fantastic, joyous, it now streamed rapidly along, and now with broken flow, seemed to recall to mind something antique, something forgotten by our generation.' For a time Ruibnikof remained betwixt sleeping and waking, unwilling to move, 'so pleasant was it to remain under the influence of an entirely new impression.' Half-slumbrously he could see a group of peasants sitting a little way off, listening to a song sung by a grey-haired old man, with a full white beard, keen eyes, and a kindly expression of countenance. When one song was ended, another began, which turned out to be one of the Novgorod Bui-
linas.

"When the second song came to an end Ruibnikof got up and made acquaintance with the singer, a peasant

named Leonty Bogdanovick. He heard many Bui-
linas sung afterwards, he says, and that by skilled minstrels; but their performances never again produced the strong impression which was made upon him by the broken voice of the old singer to whom he listened that stormy spring morning, on the desolate island amid the wild waves of Lake Onega."

Space does not permit us to enter into all the daily arrangements of Russian life: the marriage songs; the choruses for different times of the year—those which attend the lover to the house of his betrothed, and the dead man to his funeral, which Mr Ralston gives us so plentifully. They throw that quaint and far-off life into the pleasantest light. The songs themselves might perhaps have been improved by a more melodious arrangement of the unequal lines which take the place of rhyme in Russia. But they are often very sweet and quaint in themselves, as well as interesting in their revelations. Many of them seem to be sung chorally with an accompaniment of dances or dramatic movements, like the lyrical games which still find refuge among children in our own less melodious country. The most common of them is called the Khorovod, and is described by Mr Ralston as follows:—

"When a holiday arrives, in fine spring weather, even the saddest-looking of Russian hamlets assumes a lively aspect. In front of their wooden huts the old people sit 'simply chattering in a rustic row,' the younger men and women gather together in groups, each sex apart from the other, and talk about their fields and their flocks, their families, and their household affairs. Across the river they see their horses, free from labour for the day, browsing in the green meadows; above the cope rises the blue cupola of a neighbouring church; beyond the log-houses a streak of road stretches away into the distance, and loses itself among the woods

which darken the plain and fringe the horizon. Along the village street and the slope towards the river stroll the girls in their holiday array, merrily wending towards the open space in which the Khorovods are always held, and singing as they go :—

“ The beautiful maidens have come forth
From within the gates, to wander out of
doors.

They have carried out with them a night-
ingale,
And have set the nightingale upon the
grass,

On the grassy turf, on the blue flowers.
The nightingale will break into song,
And the beautiful maidens will begin to
dance ;

But the young wives will pour forth tears.
‘ Play on, ye beautiful maidens,
While you are still at liberty in a father’s
home,

While you still lead a life of ease in the
home of a mother.’

“ When the appointed spot is reached
they form a circle, take hands, and be-
gin moving this way and that, or round
and round. If the village is a large
one a couple of Khorovods are formed,
one at each end of the street, and the
two bands move towards each other
singing a song, which changes when
they blend together into the Byzan-
tium-remembering chorus :—

“ To Tsargarod
Will I go, will I go ;
With my lance the wall
Will I pierce, will I pierce.

“ After this they proceed with their

games and songs under the guidance of
a Khorovodnitsa, or leader of the dance.
If they become tired of performing by
themselves, they invite the village
youths to join them, singing :—

“ The bright falcons have met in the
oak forest ;
Into the greenwood have flown the white
cygnets,
Fluttering about from bush to bush,

Pondering, considering,
‘ How shall we make ourselves nests ?
How shall we build ourselves warm
nests ?’

Didi, Ladi, Didi, Ladushki !
‘ How shall we maidens form our Kho-
rovod ?
How shall we fair ones begin new carols ?’

“ Often, however, the Khorovod re-
mains composed of girls alone, and then
she who plays the male part in any of
what may be called the little operettas
which they perform, sometimes adopts
a man’s hat or cap, in order to be in
keeping with her assumed character.”

This pretty summer evening
rustic scene, with its old-world
rest and peacefulness, the quaint
music, the procession of pretty
figures, the “ woven paces and the
moving hands,” bring the whole
country and mode of life before us ;
and such an addition to our experi-
ence is one which it is pleasant to
make.

THE MINISTERS, THE PARLIAMENT, AND THE COUNTRY.

BEFORE our last number was through the press, Mr Gladstone had begun to verify the anticipations therein written concerning him. He unfortunately showed an entire want of self-command on the night of the 22d February, when the Royal Parks Bill was under discussion, used petulant and offensive language, and was vehement on a wordy quibble while unable substantially to rebut an accusation. Such behaviour, always lamentable, is especially to be regretted just now, when the eyes of Europe and of America are bent on the proceedings in the British Parliament. Mr Gladstone, having done us irreparable injury in an important foreign negotiation, should at least refrain from exposing to foreigners that we are as ill served in little matters as in great. And it is due, one would think, to the majority who carried him to power, not to let all the world see how sentimental and partial their preference was. No doubt it is very galling, after having been respected as a lion, to have the skin momentarily turned back so as to raise a suspicion of an inferior creature inside; but such an accident should suggest a more careful covering up, and not a recklessness as to points and stitches. It is most desirable that the Prime Minister should, in the present state of affairs, assume a virtue and be somewhat dignified. If not able without effort to bring his tongue into subjection, a little pains to effect that result would not be thrown away. If, for instance, he were to expend some of his vocabulary on effigies of the Opposition in his study, or were to fell a few oaks before four o'clock so as to reduce the nervous irritability, his speeches might in dignity gain much. A

First Lord of the Treasury tearing a passion to tatters is scarcely a creditable exhibition. If nothing short of success and admiration can restore his equanimity, then it is to be feared that a calmer demeanour is at present hopeless: for Mr Gladstone and his own flesh and blood do not appear to be so affectionate as they were some twelve or fourteen months since; terms of endearment and complimentary phrases are not reciprocated between them as of old; and indeed there are indications of serious disagreements. When a seat in the House of Commons happens to be vacant, the constituency which is called upon to elect a member no longer chooses a person pledged to vote for Mr Gladstone, but perversely sends a recruit to the ranks of Opposition. Indeed there is but too much proof of dissension — but too much reason to apprehend recrimination and bitter enmities in this family once so united, but now falling away to practices such as those in which it is written that dogs delight.

It is not only in regard to temper that Mr Gladstone is unfortunate; he seems to seize every occasion that offers for justifying our oft-expressed opinion that he would disappoint expectation. Surely, with grave troubles impending, and with such a trouble in chief as the American Treaty is like to prove—surely, in such a position a Minister of ordinary forethought, or possessing moderate tact, would make some concession to opinion, would make a little effort to soothe the ruffled feeling of the country. Well, an excellent opportunity is afforded early in March of graciously bowing to the public sentiment in a small matter, the appointment of a clergyman to

a benefice. How does Mr Gladstone use this opportunity? He is obstinate, uncompromising, litigious. He labours, with much ingenuity of words, to prove himself in the right, against the convictions of men who know him to be substantially in the wrong, and who desire from him not a maze of verbiage, but some acknowledgment of the supremacy of the law. He not only does not turn the accident to good account, but he takes pains to damage still further his already perilous condition. Neither Parliament nor people is likely to approach the Treaty in a more forgiving humour because we have a Minister who demands that his infallibility shall be the first article of our creed.

There is a class of minds which delights in refinements and subtleties, and in drawing out of plain and ordinary expressions such meanings as an ordinary intelligence would never have dreamed of. A specimen of this class of minds is to be found in almost every community, and its possessor is generally a notable person, whose paradoxes are always mentioned and admired when plain reasoners are discussing the subject-matters in everyday fashion. Such persons are for the most part harmless, as nobody thinks of adopting their ingenious views; but their clever perverseness is in itself amusing, and every one desires to know how they regard a matter of general interest. Mr Oldbuck, the Antiquary, proving that nobody can be legally imprisoned for debt in Scotland, though aware that imprisonment for debt took place every day in the year under the law, is a deathless example of the sort of character which we speak of; and nobody will deny that his peculiarities are infinitely entertaining, especially his perverse readings of common words, and explanations of

common things. One sees, however, that if such people had power to act upon their far-fetched opinions, they would be very dangerous and troublesome. We have known one or two clergymen of this turn of mind, who, though not bad people in the main, caused great dissatisfaction in their parishes; and we have met in our time with officers in the army who could never construe an order or regulation according to its plain meaning, and who would take a pleasure in acting upon some wild interpretation. Spite of such instances as these, however, the world contrives to roll along and no great mischief is done. It is different when the perverse person holds high office, and can exercise his tortuous mind upon affairs of the highest importance. A ruler bent upon showing how dexterously he can violate the spirit of a law while abiding by its letter, is a very serious affliction to a country: and such a ruler unfortunately England is at this moment troubled with. The quibble by which the rectory of Ewelme was handed over to a Master of Cambridge was, we are glad to find, severely animated on in the House of Commons. A proposal to do such an act on such an interpretation of the law would have been diverting from the mouth of Touchstone, the word-splitting jester in "As you Like it," to whose mental capacity the idea was eminently fitted, and who could but have talked about doing it; but to have the laws administered in the spirit of Touchstone is rather more than we can bear. The "Ewelme scandal" was, we apprehend, not made a subject of serious attack upon the Ministry, because the "Collier scandal," a cognate fault, had already elicited a pretty clear expression of the opinion of Parliament. Just enough was said to assure Mr Gladstone (if any warning can convince

him of his imprudence) that his fine-drawn interpretations are not at all to our taste, that he must read Acts of Parliament like a man of this world, or, failing to do so, must be at once deprived of the power to tamper with them. Mr Greene, in commenting on this appointment, used the following language; he said that—

“He would take a common-sense view of this case, and pointed out that almost every newspaper in the country had condemned the right honourable gentleman’s conduct. Unless the Prime Minister were declared infallible, he did not see how hon. members could accept his reading of the Act. Everybody in this country desired that there should be a high moral standard of principle; but in his humble judgment her Majesty’s Government had descended to a very low level of morality. (Hear, hear). A friend of his was staying at a friend’s house in the country a few years ago, and, while dressing, a great noise attracted his attention. On looking out of the window he saw a kitchen-maid on a horse, which was being led round the yard. He afterwards inquired the meaning of this, when a groom said, ‘To tell you the truth, sir, we are going to take this horse to a fair, and we want to be able to say he has carried a lady.’ (Much laughter.) Now, this was very like what the Prime Minister had done; and though he did not charge him with acting corruptly, he wished to point out that a man with such a mind ought not to be Premier. In conclusion, the hon. member expressed a hope that he should never again hear a Government charged with a matter affecting the morality, honesty, and uprightness of a great nation. (Hear).”

Pretty language this to address, before the people’s representatives in Parliament assembled, to the

immaculate Mr Gladstone, the precisian under whose guidance Government was to be purged of every earthy taint! Translate it out of the Parliamentary tongue into the vernacular, and it will be seen that, to some apprehensions, the same description of character will suit the people’s William of the present day and Mr Jonathan Wild of the past. In truth these are, as Mrs Quickly puts it, “very bitter words;”^{*} and the worst of the matter is, that they seemed quite to embody the feeling of the House of Commons. Mr Scourfield remarked that

“The laws of England could not be satisfactorily administered if common-sense were to be utterly disregarded in interpreting the law of the land.”

Mr Hunt said that

“It was most unfortunate that this appointment should have been immediately preceded by the promotion of Sir Robert Collier, which had occupied the attention of the House the other night; because it seemed to show that those occupying the highest places in the land were utterly regardless of the spirit and intention of Acts of Parliament, and did not set by any means a good example of the way in which the law should be administered.”

Again, Mr Bouverie, in a speech certainly not marked by rancour, but rather by regret, used these words:—

“Are there any extraneous circumstances by means of which we may arrive at the meaning of the Act now under discussion?—for we must bear in mind that the ink of it is scarcely dry, and we have means for discussing it which will not be in the possession of members of Parliament fifty years to come.†

^{*} We would beg the ‘Spectator’ newspaper, which did us the honour of animadverting on some observations referring to Mr Gladstone in our last month’s number, to take note of this speech of Mr Greene, which was spoken to Mr Gladstone’s face, and in presence of the House of Commons. Surely it is useless to try to attribute to party prejudice or party malice reflections which the Premier’s own perversity is forcing upon all classes of the country.

† We were glad to find Mr Bouverie pointing out that the intention of the Act

"Now, let us consider what the right honourable gentleman did in reference to this appointment. Instead of taking the course which, as it seems to me, would commend itself to any one reading the Act, and knowing its history, he wrote to a quiet country clergyman and suggested to him a method of evading a plain Act of Parliament, by going to Oxford and qualifying himself in a roundabout way to take this living. (Hear, hear.) These circumstances are most regretful. I do lament that the Prime Minister of this country should have taken a course that is open to question in this way. (Hear, hear.) I admit, as I did at first, his high conscientiousness, his high sense of honour, his determination to do right, but I have noticed his strong determination always to carry through Parliament that which accords with his own wishes. (Hear, hear.) He sees the object which he has in view, but he does not see the force and strength of objections which may be made against what he wishes to carry. It is the business of this House to point the force of those objections; and I hope the discussion of to-night will be a warning to the right hon. gentleman not to pursue in future these very exceptionable courses in order to evade the provisions of Acts of Parliament."

Incidentally to this debate there was discussion of a remark of Mr Gladstone's about advising the extinction of an Act of Parliament by the Royal *veto*. The right hon. gentleman repudiated the meaning imputed to him, but not in such a way as to satisfy the House. It may have been a mere flourish, uttered without reflection; but, whatever it meant, the remark grated upon the feelings of an assembly already alarmed by the revival of

Prerogative, thought to be dead and buried. At any rate it affords another instance of the Premier's unhappy proneness to run counter to the opinions and sentiments of the country, and proves that his mind still harps upon instruments of government which we would tolerate in these days no more than we would pincers and thumb-screws. Has he become besotted by the possession of power? or is perversity showing itself more plainly, simply because there is increased opportunity for its display? We know not; but this we know, that few men have ever fallen from high estimation to a decidedly low level in so short a time as Mr Gladstone. He is rapidly failing, as we always said he would, not so much in his legislation as in general appreciation. His character as a most scrupulous statesman it was which was thought to make him strong and unassailable: now, perhaps, it may be held that he would benefit, when ere long he will go out of office, if, like Sir Peter Teazle, he can leave his character behind him!

It is pleasant to turn from weakness and blunders to a subject of which we can speak with approbation. Military men seem to agree in opinion that Mr Cardwell's plan for localising and recruiting the Army is a practical one, which, if fairly carried out, may be of very great benefit. It will at once commend itself to the influential class which is conversant with the requirements and interests of the militia, which force will, under the proposed ar-

being within the *actual knowledge* of the present Parliament, it was mere waste of time to endeavour to prove such intention from the words. We should have been pleased to see this more strongly insisted on in answer to Sir R. Palmer and the Lord Advocate in the Collier debate. Concerning the Act in that case evaded, we wrote last month: 'Had it been an old law, made by a past generation, we should have had no other way of getting at its intention but through its words. But the present House of Commons stands towards the Act of 1871 in a relation in which it stands to very few other Acts, and in which no other Parliament can ever stand towards this Act.'

rangement, acquire greater prominence as an arm of defence, and enjoy opportunities hitherto unknown to it of becoming efficient. It is some drawback to this good fortune that the militia barracks and depots are to become henceforth the property of the State, instead of being county property; because, if the militia regiments be no better cared for in regard to barracks than the regular forces, they will be likely hereafter to cast many a regretful thought back on the benches of magistrates in the county towns when they experience the clipping and procrastination and indifference of the War Office in matters concerning which they used to obtain every consideration from their county justices. No provision probably can be made against this. The Government does not, of course, intend that the militia shall suffer by the exchange; only one cannot help seeing that the next time a Government desires to recommend itself by being cheap, regulars and militia will suffer alike. If so, those who know how the Army have suffered in this respect must have many misgivings for the militia. This, however, points to a possible grievance rather than to a defect in the proposed organisation; and the approximation of the militia to the regular forces is unquestionably desirable if we are to have a militia at all. Mr Holms, as no doubt our readers have observed, in his speech in Committee on the 4th of March, advocated the abolition of the militia as an obsolete force, and would have augmented the reserves of the regular Army instead. Some day, perhaps, his plan will come into operation (for there is nothing wild or mischievous in the idea that the whole of our forces should consist of regular soldiers and reserves); but for the present it would seem that we are going quite as far in the direc-

tion of abolition as it is prudent to go, or as the country will endure. We want the aid of the county powers to set the new scheme in operation. It would therefore be highly injudicious to institute a change which would destroy their special interest in the general measure, and might not, after all, be an improvement.

The acquisition of proper exercising-grounds in the vicinity of each military centre, will be an invaluable help towards making the troops efficient. Indeed, the want of such accessories has hitherto, at many stations, been a harassing bar to the endeavours of zealous commanding officers. The propriety, therefore, of making such a provision as this, does not require to be proved. It only seems a good fortune beyond belief that Government are willing to ask the money for it.

It will now be for the militia, its disabilities being thus removed, to show that it can become an effective force, able in these days of scientific warfare to contribute economically to the defence of the kingdom.

To glance next at what is proposed to be done for the regular forces, the greatest point of all is the expansive power which they will obtain if the formation of reserves should be successfully carried out, and the reserves should be found to answer their intention. To have a sufficiency of trained soldiers ready on the country's sudden call to take their places in the ranks, while they are inexpensive as long as unemployed, means the reduction of the question of defence to its very simplest form. We have every wish that it should be tried, and tried with such goodwill that nothing be wanting which can contribute to its success. At the same time we must jealously guard against a fatal danger which may lie hid

under this promising design—the danger, that is, of having, after all, only paper reserves, which in the day of necessity will not answer our expectations. We must be quite certain that the men who, hoping that their military career is over when they cease to serve with the colours, pass to civil life and begin to take root, will willingly return to active service in time of need. In case of invasion, where the danger would come immediately home to every soul, there can be little doubt that the reserve would stand to its arms without pressure; but the question is, How will it be when the alarm may be in India, or in some distant colony, or when the quarrel may be one in which Great Britain may not be directly, or in the first degree, interested, as the Crimean war? And on the practical answer depends whether the scheme has any value or not. It is evident that in case of the reserves not being available to the full extent supposed, we shall have been leaning on a rotten staff, and be really in worse plight than if we had had no belief in our strength. It is evident, too, that by pointing to the numbers which may have passed into the reserve, a Minister, except when we are in presence of hostilities, may always answer the objections of any who may doubt the reality of our strength. He will think it sufficient to state the number of trained men whom he can call from his vast reserves, which, after all, will not reassure those who will still ask in Hotspur's words—"But will they come when you do call for them?" It is therefore of the first importance that we should be at all times assured of the readiness of the reserves to turn out at the shortest notice. If it be said that this system of reserves answers admirably

on the Continent, and that is proof sufficient of its soundness, we reply that a system which may be well adapted for Continental nations, may not be so well suited for England. In this country it would be exceedingly difficult to compel the reserve men to fulfil their obligations, if there were among them anything like a disposition to evade them. And it is certain that in this country influences might be brought to bear on the soldiers which could by no possibility be used abroad. We know that there are in every town men who, in the cause of peace, and in the belief that they are performing a higher duty than that which they owe to their country, will even try to seduce a soldier from his profession. Such persons can effect but little in misguiding men who are with the colours; but it may be far otherwise with those who have returned to civil life, and who may be only too well inclined to listen to arguments against going to war. Not much more than a year ago we were compelled to advert on the conduct of persons who exhorted the working classes not to fight, if we should go to war, as was then probable, unless certain political demands should be conceded.* Would such persons hesitate to tamper with the reserves?

The advantages which regiments are likely to derive from being constantly quartered in, and mainly recruited from, a given district of the kingdom, must be easily comprehended. For years past the rank and file of the Army has suffered great moral wrong. In garrison towns and in country districts it has been but too much regarded as a collection of *vauriens*, good enough as food for powder, but altogether without the pale of what are called decent people—licentious

thriftless, a necessary evil. Many a humble family has considered itself disgraced by one of its young men enlisting, or by one of its young women marrying a soldier. No doubt such opinions have operated powerfully in deterring men from enlisting; indeed we find it stated in the recent Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting, that young men have to be sought for and persuaded to enlist, and that they do not, of their own motion, offer to join the Army. This undoubtedly results, in some degree, from the injurious opinion entertained of the military profession among the classes from which the rank and file are obtained. Now it is simply because the soldier is, as a rule, a stranger in the place where he may be quartered, that this erroneous and injurious opinion of him is held by the people. Once—a very long time ago—that opinion was deserved; indeed it was held by some legislators that the soldier ought to be an outcast. And even so late as 1846, a historian of great repute could describe the recruits as drawn from “the lowest ranks of society, chiefly from the inhabitants of great towns, and often inveigled into the service in a moment of intoxication, or induced to enter it to escape from creditors.”*

But the idea of what a soldier should be, and the soldier himself, have greatly changed since the days when these things were said. Great efforts have been made to obtain respectable young men for recruits, and to educate and elevate all who enlist. The rank and file of the army may now, without fear of dis-

paragement, be compared morally with any industrial civilians recruited from the same classes as themselves; while in the peculiarity of having been subjected to discipline, they possess a decided advantage over those civilians. Yet the old stigma still sticks to them, because, as we have said, they are mostly strangers where they sojourn; and the inhabitants of those places, never through intimacy becoming acquainted with their real characters, believe them to be the same as the traditional reprobates who have in reality long since passed away. The privileges and emoluments of the soldier are also habitually misunderstood, and believed to be still such as they were in time past, from the same cause—namely, from the civil population being but very little acquainted with the soldier—from their shunning him, in fact. Now the system of localising regiments must tend to make the civil population and the military acquainted, and must, if what we have said above of the soldier's improved moral character be correct, tend to raise his profession in their estimation. Soldiers are therefore likely to benefit immensely by the change of system. It is thought, too, by some persons, that under the new plan, voluntary unsolicited enlistment may be of common occurrence; nay, that a cockade may be sought for with as much pains and avidity as a commission. But we cannot help thinking those who entertain this hope over-sanguine. The Report, already quoted above, of the Inspector-General of Recruiting, gives ground for no such hope.† The service, as it now stands, cannot

* Alison's History of Europe from 1815, vii. 250.

† “In the course of the year it was considered desirable to ascertain if the requisite number of young men could be procured without any recruiting agents, simply by opening registry offices throughout the country.

“The question was referred to and answered by all officers employed in the Recruit-

compete with the various civil employments, and a better remuneration is necessary to make young men elect it. This fact, frequently set forth in our pages, may now be learned from the concluding paragraph of the Inspector-General's Report, which is as follows :—

“ However, the advantage of an efficient Regular Army, combined with a reliable Reserve Force, is so great, that any further inducement to enlist that it may be found eventually necessary to grant, will be well bestowed towards the important object to be attained.”

In thus arguing, however, we must not omit to mention a prospective boon now offered to the soldier ; that is, the preference which he, if discharged with a good character, will obtain from the Civil Service Commissioners when appointments shall be made to clerkships and other civil employments. This, when understood, will of course operate favourably on recruiting ; but much more will be required before the service can be sought after.

If the soldier, under the new arrangement, be certain to gain in reputation, he is equally certain to lose in that prestige which has been creative of military romance. A regiment composed of natives of the district where it has been for years, and from whose ranks many of the elders of the neighbourhood have subsided into tradesmen or rustics, can never in quiet times produce the same sensation, or be regarded with the same admiration, as the corps of strangers marching into a town no one knew from whence,

and soon disappearing mysteriously as it came. All that will be gone. The regiment will be an institution as much as the burial club or the Rechabite Society : its members will be known to have fathers and mothers like ordinary mortals : they will be seen to prosper and to suffer, to know hopes and fears in common with all humanity : their little histories will be familiar to the whole vicinity. They must cease to be heroes except when returning from the wars. That, however, is mere matter of sentiment and *éclat*, and need not be seriously considered. There is, though, another probable consequence of localising regiments which has been too much obscured by the evident advantages of the scheme. It has been a maxim hitherto, that in order to preserve discipline, and to keep the soldier untainted by political animosities or by party feelings of any kind, he should be frequently moved from place to place, and prevented from feeling himself to be part of the local population. That safeguard has been, or will be, abandoned, and we have not heard by what means it is proposed that the uneducated soldier shall be kept the unflinching, unreasoning servant of the State when all his kith and kin may be violently excited by some passing cause. It may be possible to instil into him a sense of duty superior to all private inclination ; but it must at least be admitted that in his new and comparatively settled condition his obedience may be sorely tried. We know how, not very long ago, a parcel of stupid

ing Department. These officers have in most cases shown that, in the neighbourhood of their posts, the proposed measure would not succeed. They were not influenced by any pecuniary interests, as they would not have been affected by the change. In making their reports, they show that every man offering to enlist has done so unbiassed, and fully capable of judging for himself as to the soundness of his decision ; but that in most instances the decision has resulted from the reasons given to him by the recruiting agent.”—*Report of the Inspector-General of Recruiting, dated 2d January 1872.*

volunteers insisted upon taking part, with their uniforms on their backs, in a political demonstration. When troops of the line come to be subject to the same local influences as volunteers, how will they be prevented from conceiving that they have the same rights and duties as other citizens, or from attempting to distinguish between their military and their civil duties? It is certain, moreover, that the unity of the military class will suffer largely by the localisation of its constituents. Regiments will know and care as little about each other as regiments of militia do now. There is danger of tone disappearing from the service at large, and of the military view of a particular question in Kent being diametrically opposed to the military view in Lancashire. These things are brought forward in no spirit of contradiction. They are points involving the efficiency of the Army and the wellbeing of the whole community; and they ought not to be lost sight of amid the enthusiasm which may be aroused by a captivating and in many respects beneficial plan. On the contrary, they should receive the very closest and most anxious attention while we are devising such a radical change in organisation and distribution. This attention is rendered more necessary by the weakening of discipline likely to result from the abolition of purchase. We have repeatedly pointed out how, under the old system, the personal influence of the officers mainly operated in the preservation of discipline. It

is a pleasant and a politic fiction that the Mutiny Act and the power of the Horse Guards are the real controlling forces of the army. But let any man reflect upon the issue of any question of discipline that has once got beyond regimental bounds—that is, that has been referred to what is called higher authority, the authority of the Commander-in-Chief and of the War Minister. Has not discipline in such cases invariably suffered? And yet within regiments discipline has been maintained by the personal influence, as we hold, of the officers. Officers of the influential class will disappear now under the system which Mr Cardwell vaunted at Oxford as calculated to introduce officers from all classes into the service. Personal influence is likely to be an exceptional force henceforth; and therefore it is more than ever necessary, this aid to discipline being withdrawn, to diminish by every possible means the soldier's inducements to indiscipline. We confess we do not see how this is to be done; but we may fairly call upon the authors of the reformed system to say how they propose to maintain the control over the soldier's feelings and acts requisite to make him an unfailing support of order and reliable agent of the commonwealth. We do not at all mean that they cannot give a good answer to this demand; but we do mean to say that the demand ought to receive an answer before any sweeping change is permitted.*

So considerable a change as has

* We have observed with surprise that, while there have been discussions and suggestions in plenty about recruiting, drilling, brigading, and quartering, so little has been said about the great essential, discipline. The popular idea would seem to be that this is a property inherent in troops as the yellow colour in gold, and that the fear of its disappearing need not affect us. True it is that hitherto the obedience and loyalty of our army have been perfect and conspicuous; but they are not inalienable qualities—they are ends which have proceeded from adequate means. So far is discipline from being a matter of course, that it is simply marvellous, when the Englishman's hatred of compulsion or control is considered, how we have maintained

been promised cannot, of course, be made without great expense. To the expense we shall certainly not object, provided the design be honestly carried out. We will simply remark in passing, that one of the cries on which Mr Gladstone's Government obtained a Parliamentary majority at last general election was excessive Army expenditure. That Government is now about to establish an expenditure greater than we have ever before furnished for the Army in time of peace. Mr Cardwell, it is true, has produced printed estimates showing a less expenditure than that of last year; but he at the same time proposes to increase the national debt by three millions and a-half!! This is a strange way of saving. We look in vain in the said estimates for the charges for the increased Staff, the movement of troops, and the re-arrangement of commands, which the new system will entail. Heretofore it has been understood that the printed Army estimates for the year contained an account of all the expenses which Parliament was to be asked to vote on account of the Army in that year. Mr Cardwell's estimates for 1872-73 do not contain such an account. They exhibit a saving which he does not intend to make, and the estimate seems to have been prepared by the process popularly known as "cooking." However, as we know very well that our Army cannot be brought into, nor kept in, a proper condition without money, we shall be very glad to accept a good measure at Mr Cardwell's hands, and to pay the cost of it. It will be for Ministers to settle with Parliament as to the omissions from the estimates, and with their own consciences as

to the cry which they raised concerning military expenditure.

We will not pretend to overlook the plea that the large expenditure will be required during the time of transition only, and that it is sure to result in very great economy hereafter. If the new plan had nothing better than this promise to recommend it, we should not have had a word to say in its favour. Let any man think of the increased pay foreshadowed by the Inspector-General of Recruiting, of the expenses of redeeming officers' commissions, of the largely-increased sum which must ere long be paid to enable officers to retire, of the cost of maintenance of the many new barracks which we are to acquire at an expense of $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions, and then decide whether a material reduction of cost can be reasonably hoped for. We expect nothing of the kind, and say, as we have often before said, that cheap Army efficiency is mere cant. Are not Ministers, to their own confusion, confirming by their demands of this year the truth of our repeated assertions? The heavy expense entailed by the cheap Government is already upon us; the promised saving is still in the clouds. For all that, we do not quarrel with them because they cannot make a useful Army without the necessary expense; but because they raised a cry against another Government which they accused of excessive expenditure, while now by their estimates they acknowledge a still greater expenditure to be necessary to efficiency.

Besides the abstract character of the Army scheme, the time chosen for effecting it deserves to be carefully considered. We are not yet clear of the misunderstanding with

it so successfully. We have been doing many things lately which, whatever good results they may have, are not likely to strengthen discipline; and if we are wise, we shall make discipline our first consideration, instead of postponing it to all the others,

America, which, although at present it promises to be a peaceful dispute, yet may at any time assume a more unpleasant aspect. Is it wise to commence a process of radical Army reform while such a dispute remains unsettled? Some member of the House of Commons quoted lately a saying of Mr Abraham Lincoln, to the effect that it is unwise to "swop horses" when crossing a ford. It is so certainly; and we might possibly wait till we are over the ford to carry out our reform, maturing and perfecting the plan while we are crossing.

The great addition sanctioned for the artillery, though it does not belong to this year's changes, is nevertheless a thing to note in connection with them. When carried into effect (for neither men nor horses have yet been nearly made up to the complement), this will add materially to our defensive power. Each battery, too, will henceforth have its full number of officers with the guns; that is to say, battery-officers, who may be selected for Staff or *quasi*-military appointments, will be at once replaced instead of leaving blanks, as was the custom. Without a proportionate augmentation of this arm, the increase and brigading of cavalry and infantry would have been to little purpose. There remains a great deal to be done in providing warlike and commissariat stores and store-houses. Indeed, all the improvement has yet to be made. It is the plan alone that is before us; but we must hope that it will be honestly tried, and not damaged in public opinion by parsimonious working.

The Dissenters' attack on the Education Act failed, as we foresaw that it would. The country is to be congratulated on this failure,

which was signal, as it may be hoped that Dissenting assurance has received a check which will cause it to refrain for the present from a more open attack upon the Established Church. That the blow, though aimed at the schools, was intended to strike the Church through the sides of the schools, there can be no doubt. The prospect of ordained clergymen having opportunities of instructing the ignorant neglected children of poor and callous parents, was so revolting that these humane Dissenters would prefer to let the ignorance with its attendant evils continue, rather than that the ministry of the hated Church should be the means of enlightening it. These may be Liberal endeavours, and strictly in accordance with modern Liberalism; but (to borrow a form of expression from "She Stoops to Conquer") they look very like old-fashioned intolerance of the very narrowest and most inhuman kind.* We are by no means sorry that the attack was made, as it sufficed to show the character of the objections which Nonconformists make against the Act, and the impossibility of supporting these objections before an assembly that would require sound, dispassionate argument, and not the outpouring of sectarian envy. It brought out also the fact, that in the secular education of the people the Established Church of England is nobly doing its duty, and is by many degrees in advance of any other body whatever which undertakes to give instruction. If, therefore, the education of the people be of the importance which all parties say that it is, we hardly see how any can escape the conclusion that the Establishment is in this respect, if in no other, a national blessing.

One may fairly ask, if the Dis-

* "HARDCASTLE (*aside*).—This may be modern modesty, but I never saw anything look so like old-fashioned impudence."—Act II. sc. 1.

santers' case is so weak—if their arguments are such only as cannot plainly be presented to the House of Commons, although they are exceedingly palatable in conventicles and on sectarian platforms; if the attack on the Education Act means, in plain language, nothing more than an attempt to obstruct the useful labours of the Church of England in order that Nonconformists may not be mortified by the knowledge of her success in this good cause, how could any sensible man imagine that the attempt to alter the law would prosper? The answer is as ready as a borrower's cap. The Dissenters counted, not on the force of their arguments, but on the weak, time-serving policy of the Government, to make their attack good. They knew how far Ministers will go to catch or retain votes. They saw how, not so long ago, the Established Church in Ireland was extinguished to gratify a feeling in Roman Catholics exactly similar to that which is now gnawing the hearts of the Dissenters. To remove a sentimental grievance from a portion of the community, disestablishment and disendowment were ruthlessly resorted to. Why not, then, check or put a stop to the instruction of the people, in order that no Nonconformist supporter of the Government may be pained by the reflection that the Church has been afforded a good opportunity, and that it is equal to, and is using, it? The question is a fair one, but it would have been well to recollect that the Irish experiment did not succeed so well as to induce Parliament to listen to any more sentimental grievances; also that Mr Gladstone's power over the Legislature is not what it was. It might have occurred to the Nonconformists, too, that it is not the constitutional alteration of laws, but the specious violation of them, which

seems to be the pet study of Ministers at present. If, instead of proceeding in the old humdrum way, Mr Dixon had devised some cunning method, supported by gossamer argument, for evading the Education Act altogether, perhaps he might have succeeded in spite of Parliament and people.

Amid all the interesting topics with which the Ministry has to deal, there comes up a fact of great significance as regards their prospects, although it may not have an immediate effect. Mr Bright, formerly a member of the Cabinet, may be said now to be in opposition. The genuineness of a letter which lately appeared in the 'Times,' purporting to be from him, has not been disputed. We may therefore assume that, as Mr Bright cannot give his confidence to any Government which cannot get the work of the country done for less than £70,000,000 a-year, Mr Gladstone's Government will no longer enjoy his support. Now, none of us can have forgotten that of the patchwork majority which sustained Mr Gladstone in 1869 Mr Bright led the largest section. Indeed, Mr Bright might be said to represent the real power of the Administration much more correctly than any other Minister; and had he not been induced to join the Cabinet, it may have been that the Gladstone Government could never have commenced business at all. The illness of Mr Bright having forced him to retire from office, the Government has been obliged to make the best figure that it could without his assistance. And, plainly, their heavy estimates of this year are a consequence of the cat being away. Now if, in addition to its other troubles, the Ministry has to encounter the opposition of Mr Bright and his followers, it would seem to be in a parlous way. The

time has come—a time long foreseen by many—when it is necessary to choose between openly neglecting the defence and service of the nation and running counter to Mr Bright. Happily for us, the temporising Government has chosen, as might have been expected, to avoid the danger which more immediately impended, but in so doing it has prepared a bed of thorns for itself.* The misery of such a bed will be a most righteous punishment for the specious lure of efficiency with economy with which the nation was amused. Mr Bright is, no doubt, clear and consistent in his views, and in that respect far superior to the Ministry, which appears to have no definite policy at all, except a determination to keep in place as long as it can. But he must have found himself very unpleasantly shackled by the requirements of office. Having to speak by the book, instead of dealing out vague, random, and wholesale assertions, must have been extremely irksome. Now he is free again to make sweeping charges against whole classes of the community, and to insist upon the action of Government being bounded by arbitrary lines. Either Mr Bright

“Must have liberty
Withal, as large a charter as the wind,”

or his influence on the people dwindles away to nothing. Accuracy, the test of facts and figures, responsibility for blustering and injurious denunciations, are incompatible with success as a demagogue. It must be, therefore, matter of satisfaction to himself that Mr Bright has shaken himself loose from his late slippery colleagues. He is clear of most of the recent blunders and scandals,

and may resume business in his old line. He can thrive without the Government; it is another question, how can the Government exist with Mr Bright—the man “whose voice,” as Mr Gladstone said, “the House loves to hear”—in opposition?

Another fact, not without its significance, is the invitation of the towns of Lancashire to Mr Disraeli. The action of Lancashire at the last general election surprised a great many people, and there are thinking men who to this day believe that some abnormal influence, some spirit of contradiction, possessed the cotton district, which, by a fancied prescription, must, as a rule, be outrageously Radical. A little reflection on what has been going on in other parts of England since the beginning of 1869 may perhaps result in some comprehension of Lancashire's seeming caprice. What the Lancashire towns did at the general election, almost every town that got the opportunity has done since. We may infer, therefore, that they were only a little quicker in finding out the hollowness of the promises of the Gladstone Administration, and that they took the lead in a reaction which is now becoming general. In fact, the manufacturing and working population of the kingdom, led by that of the duchy, begins to perceive that, except in fair words, it is never likely to get anything from a *soi-disant* Liberal Government. It is beginning to think for itself instead of accepting facts and inferences from the mouths of agitators, and allowing itself to be used as a mere tool. It believes that it will get more consideration, if less flattery, from a Conservative than from a Radical Government. It

* When writing last month we accepted the Army estimates as a true index of what the expenditure of the War Department was to be, and were under the impression that Mr Bright's spirit still controlled the Administration. It has since appeared that the saving shown in the Army estimates is more than counterbalanced by expenses for the Army which do not appear there.

remembers that Lord Derby's Reform Act enfranchised it, and gave it the means which it now possesses of making its grievances and its wants known : and it clearly intends to have no more dealings with those who treat it to such profusion of words, while in act they give nothing. The public demonstration which is to take place in Pomona Gardens, Manchester, will, it is to be hoped, make the whole country aware that a great change has come over the industrial classes, and that the Conservative working-man, instead of being a myth, as some timid Liberals try to persuade themselves that he is, is a very considerable and a very determined power in the State, likely to carry the elections in most of the large towns, and to give a tone to legislation for some time to come.

It is with regret that we learn that the report of the Megara Commission will not be discussed in the House of Commons until after we shall have gone to press. No doubt the imputations and apportionment of blame therein made will be narrowly criticised by a House fully alive to the importance of rendering such scandals unlikely to occur again for some time to come. In particular we trust that the paragraph—which appears to have tumbled into the Report by some accident—absolving the economical Government from all blame in this matter, will be straitly challenged. The Commission was required to report upon the causes that led to the shameful occurrence ; but they have thought it necessary to report on one cause which did *not* lead to it—namely, false economy. Why didn't they say that the loss of the ship was not due to the cattle plague, or the Purchase system, or to Mr Gladstone (so fond of refining) having rubbed down the iron plates to the thickness of an egg-shell !!

If this unseaworthy vessel was sent from home to cross the Indian Ocean, or rather to perish there, for some reason other than for the saving of expense, what was that reason ? If no other reason can be shown, then, spite of the attempted whitewashing of the Commission, Parliament will, it is to be hoped, fasten the blame of the whole catastrophe where it is deserved—namely, on the Government. The Commission, we must remember, was named by Ministers themselves, and was not likely to consist of men who would take an unfavourable view of a Ministerial act ; though this we say without the slightest insinuation that the Commission, or any member of it, would subscribe an opinion of which they were or he was not thoroughly convinced. But every man knows that, if under accusation, he would like to name the judge and jury ; and the most honourable of men may have this wish, though desiring to name only men of unimpeachable integrity. Again, as to saddling the Controller and a string of minor officials with the responsibility, it is very well known that subordinates in Government Departments, though they may not receive express and distinct orders on every case, are expected to deal with every case *in the spirit of the Government*. If, therefore, the Government be so parsimonious that subordinates know the proposal of just and liberal measures to be certain to fail of any good effect, while likely to bring disfavour on the proposers, they can hardly be blamed for making the best shifts possible under the circumstances. The blame really should rest on those who have put proper action out of the question.

It would be pleasant if, after glancing at so many shortcomings on the part of our rulers, we were able to say something consolatory touching the matter which, before

all others, is occupying the national mind. But alas! lapse of time does not make the blunders of the American Treaty appear more tolerable than they did at first. We have the relief of knowing that they will not lead to immediate war; but beyond this our position remains as untoward and humiliating as ever it was thought to be. The utmost hope that we hear expressed is, that Mr Gladstone's notable efforts may be pronounced a failure, and that the country, with all the disadvantages of this bungling adhering to it, may commence again to make a new Treaty. The £16,000 which the former negotiations were to cost us may be looked upon as worse than wasted; and our further attempts must be made with all the drawbacks experienced by a commander who is forced to fight at the head of recently-beaten troops. We are in the condition of an unfortunate west-countryman who has been pixie-led, or, as they call it in Cornwall, pisky-led—that is to say, who, having started from a given point at even with the intention of proceeding to another point not far distant, is led about and exercised all night by elves, and at daybreak finds himself, weary and footsore, at the point whence he set out. Great Britain has not often been made to cut such a ridiculous figure before the world, and it is to be cordially wished that the piskies who have led us this dance may get a retribution which will cause them to remember their diversion with anything but satisfaction. Until after Easter, we presume, Parliament will not come to a decision as to how the vexatious difficulty shall be dealt with; for there are a great many momentous matters in connection with it which require to be most carefully considered. First, supposing there is no choice but to withdraw from the recent Treaty and

to propose a fresh one, we have to put our decision and proposal in such a way as may be most likely to procure the assent of the United States. Secondly, we have to determine who, in this grave conjuncture, shall be allowed to treat with the States on the part of Great Britain. Shall we run the risk of being pisky-led again? or shall we choose guides not likely to exhaust our strength, and, what is worse, to fray our honour by imbecile action? In plain words, dare we trust Mr Gladstone's Government to pursue this matter any further? Thirdly, supposing it to be thought expedient to allow the Gladstone Ministry, under close surveillance, to conduct the negotiations, a choice must be made of commissioners to represent us at Washington, or wherever further sittings may be appointed to take place.

With regard to the first point, there appears to be reasonable ground for hoping that, if skilfully approached, the United States' Government may consent to the abrogation of the Treaty. The great body of the American people has not received our remonstrance ungraciously. A few well-known brawlers and blusterers have of course delivered themselves of their "prave 'orts;" but we are bound to acknowledge the liberal spirit in which our objections have been received. Although the withdrawal of claims for constructive damages has been refused, yet we have the satisfaction of finding in the American press and people many who condemn altogether the claims for indirect damages, and very many more who, though still standing to the claims, meet us with fair and conciliatory arguments. In a word, there does not appear to be any general wish in America that the negotiations so inauspiciously begun should not end in a settlement of our long dispute;

only there is a refusal to admit that claims deliberately and publicly advanced are inconsistent with the terms of the Treaty, or that they can be abandoned. Americans may therefore listen to our plea, that the Treaty does not secure to us the conditions which we were made to believe that it secured, and that, as now worded, it does not even express what our Commissioners intended, if indeed the poor creatures were conscious of any intention beyond the drawing up of a paper which they could induce the American Commissioners to sign. Should the Americans do this, and, as a consequence of each nation differing from the other in interpretation of the Treaty, allow the whole agreement to be annulled and another to be framed, then it is highly probable that the second attempt may be successful. We must not, of course, conceal from ourselves that there are many courses open to America, by pursuing which she might wound our honour and disastrously embitter the whole contention. Of these the most to be deprecated is one that has been threatened by a portion of the Transatlantic press—namely, to lay the claims as they now stand before the arbitrators, leaving it to Great Britain to come into court or not as she may choose. In case, then, of the indirect claims being approved by the court, we might be accused of refusing to fulfil an agreement solemnly entered into if we should decline (as we certainly should) to pay the enormous damages. But as this would be simply to bring about a most vindictive war, it is to be hoped that neither it nor any similar method of affixing a stain on us may be attempted, but that the whole matter may again be opened to discussion, in the hope that a Treaty precise and worthy of statesmen may be the result.

But we have to decide whether further correspondence under this head can, after what has occurred, be with advantage conducted by her Majesty's present advisers. The next Treaty, if it be agreed that another shall be made, *must* be final and binding. It behoves us, therefore, to see that we have a Cabinet not of Utopian dreamers, but of calm, clear-headed, firm statesmen, able to say plainly what they contend for, and to insist that the Treaty, if made at all, shall secure to us what we require. It is too much to hope that Mr Gladstone and his Cabinet can transact so weighty a business without again blundering, and this time their blunders would be irretrievable. To give us, therefore, the best possible chance of making an equal contract, we should displace those servants of the Crown who have been already tried and found wanting, and commit our work to a new set of heads and hands. The Gladstone Cabinet has earned its dismissal. It has brought the country into a most unfortunate condition—a condition of war it might have been; and whatever may be the final issue of the controversy, the shameful mismanagement of the case on our side should entail due punishment. The question of which Mr Horsman has given notice, and which is in fact a proposal to take the power of deciding in this matter out of the hands of Ministers, seems to point to a change of Government. The Cabinet probably will not submit to be controlled by Parliament in making a Treaty, and will resist the attempt to control it, which will give the House of Commons the opportunity of expressing its opinion, and of placing Ministers in a minority.

We learn, as we are about to go to press, that Mr Disraeli purposes to call the attention of the House of Commons to our relations with the

Government of the United States of America after Easter. It seems high time for Parliament to look into the matter; for, as the 'Times' calculates, our opportunity for sending in a counter-case will have passed by before we can reasonably expect a further communication from Washington. Mr Gladstone's Government has decided on sending off another note on its own responsibility, and without taking Parliament into confidence. This time, however, our Government is as rapid as in sending the first friendly communication it was dilatory. What with the difficulties of printing and of circulation, it was impossible to object to the American case in less than a month from the receipt of it. Now, when perhaps it is desired to run faster than Parliament can follow, a week is quite sufficient for framing a rejoinder. This second note cannot by possibility be of less moment than the first: on the contrary, the correspondence, as it does not draw to a settlement, must become more and more important with every despatch. And we must say that this feverish ardour to write without interference, and therefore to write in haste, does by no means relieve us from an anxiety which is evidently shared by the 'Times,' whose leader of 19th March has these words:—"We can have no objection to the introduction into our reply of any arguments which may appear likely to prevent the Treaty from lapsing, provided only that our Ministers do not suffer themselves to be misled by their natural desire to prevent such a failure. It is so very easy to pass from our present unsatisfactory position into one still worse, that we may be pardoned for insisting on the utmost caution in every fresh step that may be taken." This is the pleasant state of feeling in which, if Ministers have their way,

the country is to be left until the end of next month, when the date for putting in the counter-claim will have passed. It is very well to talk of the utmost caution; but have Ministers in their hurry been able to use the utmost caution? Again, supposing them to have done their best, are they able to manage this matter, now that it has become more complicated, any better than they could at first? It is their own child: and if with liberty to rear it as they would, they could make it only a show and a disgrace, how will they reclaim it now that it is confirmed in crossness and intractability? This rapid lapse of the time allowed by the Treaty greatly increases the perplexity of the affair, of which we may truly say that the longer we look at it, the less we like it. This is an ugly *souvenir* of the end of 1868, when so many members were sent to Parliament charged to vote for Mr Gladstone. This is Mr Gladstone's voluntary work.

As to the third point, the Commissioners who shall be employed, if fortunately the opportunity of framing a new Treaty should be afforded us, the country seems quite to have determined that the late Commissioners shall not be allowed to jeopardise our relations with America again. The language used in Parliament on the first two days of the session, and that of the great body of the press ever since the American claims were made known, would seem to put this beyond a doubt. We do not know of any plea on which the employment of them a second time could be contended for. The obstinacy of Mr Gladstone may, of course, insist that they shall be re-employed, because it was his will and pleasure to appoint them in the first instance; but the country, it is to be hoped, will find means of resisting his will this time. More unprofit-

able servants it would be impossible to find.

The statement of the Washington correspondent of the 'New York Herald,' to the effect that the American Cabinet purposely loitered over their reply to the "friendly communication," in order that public excitement in England might have time to subside, contains good ground for hope of a greatly-improved understanding between the two countries. Whether the statement be true or false, the mere writing of it proves an immense advance in the education of the American mind. The idea would appear to have been at length received even by the believers in the 'New York Herald,' that disputes with England are matters for attentive and dispassionate consideration, susceptible of rational solutions without damage to either side—not pretexts for maddening the people with rage, and blinding them to every perception save of the hatefulness and arrogance of the English. The 'New York Herald,' or our memory deceives us, tried the old alcoholic treatment at the beginning of the difference, and found it inoperative. There has never been a dispute of such magnitude between the nations which was discussed in such a calm judicial spirit. The mind of a solid-thinking public is at last apparent in the States, overruling the clamour of rowdies, stump orators, Jefferson Bricks, and Major Chowders, and insisting upon such a treatment of public affairs as befits a dignified people. Let but this control continue, as we doubt not it will, and America will not be long in discovering wherein lay the obstacle to a proper understanding throughout the long period of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. We said last month that America had an enviable oppor-

tunity. Though she has not used this opportunity to the greatest advantage possible, yet she has so used it as to show that she can rise superior to base suspicions and imputations, and that she knows how to treat the arguments of an opponent with decency and courtesy. Before such a change in policy could have been manifested, a very great social change must have taken place. A refining and elevating process is certainly in operation, and the glimmer of reciprocal good understanding which comes to us across the ocean is an earnest of a future union of English-speaking peoples—a union of moment to the whole world. The claims involved in this dispute are not what history will fasten on as its most interesting feature. This first articulation of a sober national mind in America is what posterity will regard as the memorable part of the occurrence.

We lay down our pen without the least disposition or the least cause, as far as can be seen, to modify the opinion which we have so often expressed of Mr Gladstone's incompetency in action and of his coming unpopularity. No savage attack of opposition, no conspiracy, no stroke of fate is required to convince the people that he is a failure: it is simply necessary that they should observe and know him. Other men have been remarkable for building up reputations; but it is Mr Gladstone's distinction that, having a reputation ready-made, he has been assiduous in his endeavours for the destruction of it. To be a scholar and apt speaker, as we of course allow Mr Gladstone to be, is a very different thing from being a capable statesman. When a great opportunity occurs, like this American complication, he makes the very worst of it; but when fortune throws no stumbling-block in his way he will seek

for one, put it across his path, and trip himself up out of very wantonness. He is like a Dutch toy with the weight at the wrong end: set him which way you will he is seen presently with his heels in the air. The people accepted him for his inexhaustible talking power, his profuse professions, and his solemn, imposing mien; all which seemed to give promise that he would prove wise in council, discreet in design, and resolute in act. But he does not allow a week to pass without to some extent disabusing the public mind and exposing his shallowness. As long as Mr Bright was in the Cabinet that gentleman's will evidently prevailed, and parsimony and peace at any price were the rules: now that Mr Bright has departed, some new influence domineers over Mr Gladstone's convictions, and we have heavy estimates, and an admission that Happy England may require a

little protection besides the silver streak of sea. Nay, did not Mr Gladstone on the first night of this session rise to the grandeur of talking about our traditions and of not submitting at the point of death, reminding one of that attitude of Mr Pickwick which the bystanders confidently supposed to be a posture of defence! These things show that there is no fixed policy in Mr Gladstone; that he does not impress, but is impressed by, others. All this is becoming more manifest every day. Fortunately for us the Premier makes little attempt to conceal his defects, but insists upon being considered infallible in spite of them. There is not the least hope that he will "tak a thoct an' men'"; on the contrary, he is more likely to go on digging his political grave with his own hands, and making the country regret that it ever trusted him.

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FRENCH HOME LIFE.

NO. VI.—LANGUAGE.

If the nations of the earth were convoked in a universal *plébiscite* in order to determine by their vote what is the most inveterate habit they each possess, the probabilities are that the verdict of the majority would not be in favour of tobacco, or of a particular shape of clothes, or of certain sorts of food, or even of going to bed; but that the inhabitants of the four continents and Australasia would pretty well agree that the custom of their mother tongue is deeper rooted than any other. It is true that native languages may be utterly forgotten; but, in that case, they are replaced by some other dialect of which the use becomes as absolute as if it were the original form of speech. And even in the exceptional cases where several tongues are spoken with almost equal skill, there is always one of them which is unconsciously preferred, which forms the adopted channel of thought;—there is always one in which, though perhaps scarcely knowing it, we count, swear, and

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pray. Those three acts constitute the test—they indicate the old habit, the incontinent choice—they betray the origin, or, at all events, the land of education, of the speaker. We may acquire other idioms than our own with such completeness that we think in them when we are using them with other persons, but directly we get into a passion, directly we are alone with our conscience or with figures, we relapse into the one dialect which is essentially our own, and thereby indicate the source of our early teaching. Preferences based upon comparison, if we were free to exercise them, might lead us to use other tongues for these three acts; but there is something in us which stifles choice,—we obey our early habit, even though we recognise that our thought would find better expression in other words.

An influence so subtle, so constant, and so overpowering, can scarcely exist within and around us without affecting something more than the mere words we use; it

must surely exercise some action on our character as well. The form in which our ideas are habitually couched, must react, in some degree, on the ideas themselves, so that national differences of language may possibly be admitted as one of the indirect causes of the differences of national character. This fact, however, if fact it be, is essentially modern in its origin and its result : so long as languages were in process of formation the movement was, of course, the other way ; character then directed idiom and gave it life and shape : it is only since each race has acquired a definitely completed form of speech, in which the education of its members is conducted, that the reaction which is here suggested can have grown into existence ; it is only since dialects have attained their actual state of relative perfection that they have been able to recoil upon their makers, and to aid in guiding the attitude of their thoughts. The consequences of such a movement (if really it is at work) must necessarily be most felt by populations which talk abundantly, for its power can only spring from use and can only augment by use. As the French are probably the greatest talkers in the universe, it is on them, therefore, that the suggested recoil should be producing its most marked effects. If this theory be true, the French are no longer really masters of their language ; on the contrary, their language is tending to become their master, not materially—but morally, not in the forms of phrase they use, but in a partial and hitherto unrecognised subservience of their thinking to those forms. The effect, however, is difficult to seize, and still more difficult to trace throughout its course. Its reality would generally be denied ; for people would not like to own that their intelligence is somewhat at the mercy of the words they habi-

tually employ. Every one believes that there is analogy between the character of his nation and of its language, that the former originally formed the latter, and that the one may in some degree be tested by the other ; but we are scarcely ready yet to own, that possibly the relation between cause and effect is becoming introverted, and that language is beginning to fashion us as it was once fashioned by our forefathers.

And yet, if we take the subject in its largest aspect ; if we consider the influence of language, not only in literature and art, but in politics and history as well ; if we acknowledge, as we can scarcely fail to do, that "language offers the surest means of permanent domination ;" if we look at Russia forcibly suppressing the old idiom of Poland, at Prussia already hunting French out of Alsace and Lorraine ; if we own that "great writers are true conquerors,"—we shall end by recognising that the fate of nations may be influenced by the language which they speak ; and having reached that conviction, we shall find it somewhat easier to detect the less visible and often purely individual effect which the custom of our daily talk may work out in each of us. When Jean Jacques Rousseau said, "The tongues of the south are the daughters of joy, but necessity begot the tongues of the north," he established a distinction which we are half inclined to admit by sympathy, fantastic and exaggerated though it be, and which may provoke in some of us the instinctive sentiment that such wide difference of origin must have ended by producing forms of speech of so differing a character that they can scarcely fail to work different effects on those who habitually employ them. Their influence, thus far at all events, is vague ; but as we have what seem

to be examples of it before our eyes, we may perhaps confess that the power of expressing courtesy in graceful words disposes men to courtesy; that the creation of abstract expressions inclines their owners to go on employing them in dreamy speculations; that strange neologisms may give birth to a special literature. The French, the Germans, and the Americans appear to illustrate these three suggestions, and to indicate that they may not be altogether false.

The admission of such a principle, in however restricted a degree, gives new value to language in its application to home life. If talking really be a cause, and not simply an effect, it is indoors that it must necessarily do most work, for there it is in constant use, particularly amongst a nation of chatterers like the French. It is there that intimate locutions assume their fullest force and enter deepest into the composition of daily existence; it is there that the familiarity of household words constitutes for each family customs and traditions of its own; it is there, if anywhere, that the habitual handling of an adopted phraseology, passed onwards from the mother to the child, insensibly predisposes towards the ways of thinking which that phraseology best expresses. The man who told the same lie so often that he finally believed it to be truth, was but an example of this sort of action—frequent repetition of the same words ended by convincing him. And so it doubtless is in other shapes with the whole mass of our daily talk; we do not see its influence, but that influence is incessant, and in the long-run must tell upon us all. Specific proofs cannot be yet adduced in support of this probability, but the arguments in its favour are not altogether illusory, and it may some day grow into a certainty.

Meanwhile it adds fresh interest to the study of modern languages, and renders it more than ever useful to examine their points of difference. French offers a particularly easy field of inquiry for English people, partly because most of us know something about it, and still more because its character is sufficiently distinct from that of our own tongue to render its peculiarities more striking to us from contrast.

The real attraction of the subject does not lie, however, in the divergences of grammatical construction which separate the two languages; that part of the question was exhausted long ago; and, furthermore, it sheds but little light on the condition of the French people, as evidenced by their talk. The signs of national character come out far more clearly in trifling details of conversation with which grammar has nothing to do—in habitual phrases, in proverbs, similes, and exclamations, in local sayings, and in new words which accident may generate at first, but which habit adopts, and which grow into use because they correspond to a necessity. The conjugation of the verbs, for instance, which establishes so vast a demarcation between the Continental languages and English, does not impart to French any peculiarity of its own. It certainly produces a delicacy of shading of which we have no notion here; but that is no monopoly of France—a dozen other countries possess it too. Such of us as know its value may deplore its absence in our own case, like that of declensions in our nouns; but that is no reason for regarding it as one of the special merits which are inherently proper to French. The insufficiency of expression, the want of the finer tones and colours, which result from our shabby system of auxiliary verbs, are evident enough; but that is a shortcoming

peculiar to English: while the far more graceful and perfect modulations which are produced by directly varying every verb in tense and person, according to the service needed from it, belong to every nation except ourselves, and consequently confer no isolated privilege on France. But French, in common, however, to a great degree, with the other Latin tongues, possesses an immense advantage over the Northern languages in another point of grammar—it puts the substantive before the adjective. To an English ear, thoroughly accustomed to the contrary practice, this does not at first seem to involve any kind of merit; but if the principle be looked at closely, without prejudice, its superiority comes clearly into light. The subject, designated by the substantive, is the essential basis of all descriptive sentences; the qualification of the subject—expressed by the adjective employed—is but subsidiary; it indicates the aspect, the character, the nature, but not the thing itself. Surely, then, it is a wiser, truer, more effective form of phrase to state what the subject is before we assign to it its peculiarities. The French do this; we do not. The French say *un cheval noir*; we say a black horse. The French at once fix our attention on the fact that it is a horse, and nothing but a horse, that they are talking of; while we begin by mentioning a colour, which may belong to anything whatever, and is in no degree a necessary attribute of a horse. If the Frenchman stops after having said "*cheval*," his phrase is absolutely complete so far as its object is concerned; his audience can make no mistake as to what he means; but if we suspend our voice after saying "black," our listeners are left to guess what black thing we have in view; for aught they know,

it may be a hat, or coal, or night, or a negro. It is true that the context of the unfinished speech may roughly or approximately suggest what species of substantive we were going to name; but even then there is room for abundant doubt as to the particular word left unexpressed. It is useless to add examples, for all would be alike; this one suffices; and if it be considered honestly, without preconceived convictions, it ought to show us that amongst the qualities which constitute effective speaking, in strength, precision, and the all-necessary result of impressing the attention of our auditors with the thought in view, the designation of the thing spoken of before its attributes are defined is one of the most important.

And yet those strange, inexplicable caprices, those odd exceptions, which exist in languages as in all else round us, not unfrequently come in to alter the position of the adjective in French. Here, however, there are, with two exceptions, no rules to guide us, unless it be in a few special cases where the very meaning of the adjective depends on the place it occupies. *Un homme brave* is brave in the English sense of that description; *un brave homme* is simply a good-natured fellow; corresponding differences of signification result from the substitution of *honnête homme* for *homme honnête*, *femme grosse* for *grosse femme*, *pauvre homme* for *homme pauvre*, *sage femme* for *femme sage*. In these cases, and in one or two others like them, dictionaries and grammars may guide the hesitating foreigner; but long habit alone will teach him that, though in speaking of a black horse he must describe it as *un cheval noir*, it is equally obligatory to say *un beau cheval*; that *une belle robe*, and *une robe blanche*, *un gros livre* and *un livre amusant*, *une grande femme* and *une femme*

aimable, and a hundred similarly contradictory locutions, are all pure French, and cannot be otherwise conveyed. These cases are, however, limited to adjectives expressive of beauty or dimension, which constitute the two exceptions just alluded to; they are not numerous enough to modify the rule: and though it has become a sort of fashion during the last thirty years to try to increase their number, though affected women in particular have a tendency to pile up adjectives before they pronounce the substantive, the instinct of the nation has rejected the attempted innovation—the people feel that what they have is good, and will not change it; and though pretty lips may set them the example of exclaiming, “*quelle charmante, adorable, séduisante créature!*” they refuse to follow in the new track, and stubbornly persist in saying creature first, and giving its merits afterwards. Conceits of language do not take root in France; indeed, since the Directory and its “*incroyables*,” scarcely an attempt has been made to change either phraseology or pronunciation. Spelling has undergone trifling modifications, new words have been introduced, but form and sound have remained virtually unaltered, notwithstanding the attacks of time and fancy. The objection to placing the adjective in front is necessarily an unconscious one, just as the opposite disposition exists unremarked amongst ourselves. No one thinks about such points at all until attention is directed to them; but if an inquisitive traveller asks a Norman or a Gascon peasant why he puts the substantive first, he will be told, three times out of four, with a copious laugh, as if the fun of such a notion were enormous, “How can you know what I am talking about if I don’t tell you?” An English labourer would probably

be rather bothered if the inverse question were submitted to him. Even those smart school children, who have a pat reply in hand on three hundred subjects, would doubtless humiliate their teacher by their ignorance if a curious visitor had the indiscretion to examine them upon it. If, then, the Frenchman can give a reason for the form of phrase which he employs, while the Englishman cannot, is there not in this simple fact an argument in favour of the Frenchman? Putting theory aside, and measuring the matter solely by the instinct of the two populations, as evidenced by their capacity or incapacity to solve the problem, does it not look as if nature and common-sense were both against us here? Regarded as a rule of art, no discussion of the French system seems possible; but as the mass of a nation know nothing whatever about art, and are guided by habit alone, it is a good mark in their favour to discover that habit can be supported by explanation.

It would not, however, be quite fair to assign this faculty of explanation solely to the superior merit of the French form of construction in the particular case before us. Our neighbours enjoy another superiority, and a vastly greater one. They possess and feel their language, as a nation, with a perfectness, a completeness, and a handiness, which but few of us attain with English. It is no exaggeration to assert that, taking us as a whole, we do not know how to speak. We are, relatively, a silent race; conversation, even in the educated classes, is not regarded, as it is in France, as a necessary element of life; our children are not brought up to talk; they are not guided by their mothers to choose their words and turn their phrases; facility of expression is not considered by us to be indispensable; many of us are content

to hold our tongues ; we are uncommunicative by nature, and we make no attempt to modify that disposition. The French, on the contrary, wield words with never-failing ease. Their language is a tool to which they are so accustomed, that they can turn it to any use ; their fluency is inexhaustible, and generally they speak with grace and with grammatical exactness. Special cases are excluded on both sides in this comparison ; it applies solely to the ordinary talk of ordinary people. We are not thinking of the nature of the thoughts expressed, and still less of oratory in any of its varied forms. Parliament, the pulpit, and the bar, involve unusual study and careful preparation, and therefore lie beyond the subject ; outdoor gossip and fireside chatter are the true tests of the talking powers of a people ; it is to them alone that we can look for evidence. And, furthermore, we must take the lower strata into our account, for it is especially amongst the most untaught that the national tendency will come out with the greatest distinctness. Viewing the subject in this broad light, it seems difficult that there can be two opinions on it. France is palpably brimful of people who scarcely ever leave off talking, and who, by mere force of exercise, if not by innate skill, acquire a dexterity and facility of wording which no other land can match. They may talk nonsense all day long, there may not be one idea worth remembering in all they say ; but they pour out sentences with an unceasing flow, and in a form which proves that at all events they know their language thoroughly.

This capacity is certainly one of the most striking features of French life ; we find it, in varying degrees and stages of development, wherever we turn our ears. From childhood to old age every body talks, and, so far as re-

gards the mere roll of words, talks well. Whether the higher classes, as a whole, speak better than they do in other countries, is a question difficult to decide, for the answer to it depends almost entirely on the accidents of experience, and on personal sympathies and likings. One witness may be all for France and another all against her, each following the bent of his own prejudices, each guided by his own means of observation and by his power of forming an opinion on such a subject. But, without going into this thorny point, it may be advanced as a generally-admitted truth, that the better sort of Frenchwomen speak with a gaiety, a dash, a facility of simile and contrast, and a readiness of *à propos*, which carry their talking very near to what we understand by brilliancy, and that some of them reach absolute perfection. It is natural that it should be so ; for where the constant object is to amuse and brighten, the means must gradually adapt themselves to the end : cause and result become somewhat identical ; the speaker talks to laugh, and laughs because she talks.

Is not this a cheery and an enviable attribute ? Is it likely that the character of a people can remain permanently unaffected by such influences, or that the brightness, the *insouciance*, and perhaps even the frivolity of French nature, are not strengthened and augmented by this charming chattering of the women ?

Unfortunately they are not all alike ; though they all talk volubly, they are not all amusing. If they were, France would be all over what it is only here and there,—the home of the pleasantest society in Europe. But when one has the luck to stumble on a type of the higher sort, it is indeed a privilege to look and listen, and to feel the spell which women of such a kind cast around

them. The exceptional cases in which Frenchwomen attain to the utmost height of indoor eloquence dwell in the memory of those who have met with them: it would be difficult to forget the deep indent which they produce. Their mastery of words is wonderful, and it is accompanied by such a wholesale scatter of odd comparisons, unexpected images, strange illustrations, wild paradoxes, and tempestuous fancies, that the assemblage of all these elements seems momentarily to add fresh brightness to the air, and most certainly gives the novice listener a new idea of what words can do. Time does not weaken this impression; habit does not wear it out: as it is produced but rarely, its very scarceness makes it live. But even if it were universal its reality would not be much diminished, for its cause is so intensely pleasant that no custom could lead us to insensibility of its charms.

The men have less of this peculiar power; most of them know their language well, and, as far as mere machinery goes, are as productive as the women; but, with rare exceptions, they do not handle forms so capriciously or so luxuriantly; their imagery is less fantastic, their contrasts are less vivid, their outpouring is less torrential. It is the women who represent the talking qualities of the nation; it is they who show us practically what the absorption, assimilation, and reproduction of other people's ideas can do to produce the appearance of widespread knowledge and of well-digested thought. Frenchwomen do not read, at least not as we understand reading here; and yet many of them appear to know something about everything. No subject comes amiss to the practised Parisienne. If the conversation turns suddenly towards some fact or argument of which she never heard before, she listens

for three minutes, and then dashes into the midst, plunging right and left, making at first impossible mistakes, which she covers up by dexterous pleading, but ending, nine times out of ten, by an appreciation so singularly correct that when you go away you can't help thinking, "That woman is positively amazing; there is no beating her." The book-learning of Frenchwomen stops, pretty generally, with their school days; but that famous theory of "education by contact," which they practise with such consummate skill, goes on through their entire lifetime, and is the real source of the elastic knowledge which such numbers of them make us believe that they possess. This, however, would not be possible if, in such special cases, they were not good listeners as well as good discoursers. They take in new notions from the mouths of others, dress them up in a disguise which few can penetrate, and then parade them as their individual property. Of the many brilliant qualities of the race, there are few which have the worth of this one. It sets to work the moment two people are together; for two implies talking, and talking and picking up new ideas are synonymous processes with women such as these.

In varying degrees this disposition is general throughout the land—the whole nation imitates; but the result depends on the actor's position and skill. The lower classes have no time to give to the sharpening of their wit and tongue. The process is, after all, a luxury; for it is scarcely realisable without the aid of sufficient education, opportunity, and close attention. Like many other developments of human nature, it needs the ease and the facilities which money alone creates. A farmer's poultry girl may have within her a sacred fire which a faint breeze of occasion and example would fan

into the first flicker which precedes bright flame; but where is the breeze to come from? The faculty of imitation grows with use; without practice it remains dormant, or even dies away. Even supposing, which is absurd, that the disposition to talk cleverly is born in every Frenchman, it will be choked, in all but the richer homes, by sheer want of the means of action. But volubility and glibness do not depend on the accident of birth. It is true that they too gain by following a pattern; but as that pattern can be found all over France, in the cottages and the wine-shops as much as in chateaux and in Paris drawing-rooms, they do not suffer, as really good talking does, from the want of models. So we find them everywhere, pouring out of nearly every mouth, men and women aiding each other to keep up the prattle.

But they do not know it. They have no idea that they are always at it. If by chance some one informs them of the fact, they reply that they think loquacity eminently natural—indeed it looks to them like a duty. To a Frenchman it is an article of faith that his voice was given to him to be used: he never can be got to understand that it may possibly be a virtue to hold his tongue. He quotes with a smile of contemptuous pity the proverb of the conquered Arab, "Talking is silver, but silence is gold." To him talking represents all the precious metals, and diamonds into the bargain. He can imagine nothing of higher value, or which constitutes a more irresistible necessity. And from a certain point of view he may not be so far wrong as he appears to be at first to us dumb people. His notion of life is different from ours—he hates to be alone: communion with his fellows is the main object of his existence; he always has a theory to expound or a curi-

osity to satisfy. Take him where you please, all through the social scale, the same implacable need comes out. On the Paris Boulevards or over the dusty roads of Provence, on the wet coast of Brittany or in the factories at Lille, he is, with rare exceptions, everywhere alike. Climate or occupation make but little difference to him. Both sexes and all ages substantially agree that men and women were born to talk.

Let us not judge him by ourselves. It is neither wise nor practical to apply the habits and regulations of the United Kingdom to all the rest of the globe. They do marvellously well for us—they have helped us to become very prosperous and very powerful; but maybe they would not produce the same results elsewhere. After all, our islands (including Man, the Orkneys, and the other rocks) only represent about a sixteen-hundredth part of the surface of the earth; and that fact ought to counsel us to be modest. If we say that the Frenchman is wrong to chatter all day long, on the simple ground that we get on better by the use of silence, we ought, logically, to apply the same argument to everything else that we don't do, and to object to the habits of every nation which does not employ Kidderminster carpets, boiled mutton, and umbrellas. It is true that such a view of international obligations would oblige the Hindoos to eat cold beef and mashed potatoes, the Hottentots to wear braces, and the Japanese to adopt hanging,—unless, by the way, as they are the more numerous, they were to turn round upon us with an imperious order to give up our own habits and adopt theirs—to feed ourselves with rice, to go approximately naked, and to introduce bowel opening at the Old Bailey—all which would be disagreeable to

us. This argument, which, possibly, is not altogether absurd, should incline us to indulgence toward the benighted nations who have not the privilege of living precisely according to our prejudices. It should dispose us mercifully to permit the Amazon Indians to bore holes through their noses, and even, though that is far more difficult, to allow the French to talk for eighteen hours a-day. We do not recognise that chattering is a vast enjoyment to them, that it is one of the main causes of their gaiety, that it lights up their indoor life in a way of which we have no idea, that it cements home ties by creating a constant necessity for mutual presence, and that, in many cases, it develops intelligence, and induces correctness, ability, and brilliancy in conversation. Practice alone gives skill; and for that reason, if for no other, the habit of frequent speaking deserves encouragement.

And yet, with the decadence of France before our eyes, it is impossible to avoid asking whether all this talk may not have aided the breakdown; whether it has not contributed to bring about the crash. Whatever be its merits, whatever be the considerations which can be invoked in favour of it, has it done no harm? When history begins to dissect this modern decline and fall, will it take no note of the salient feature of French habits? will it acquit the people's ready tongues of all share of responsibility? That the incessant spilling of empty words must necessarily stimulate frivolity of thought, seems to be a probable if not a certain proposition. That the cherished music of one's own voice ends by becoming particularly agreeable, is a fact of which we see examples even outside France. That the soothing vanity which springs from it should incline the self-

approving speaker to believe in what he supposes to be the opinions he expresses, is a simple and natural transition. That these mental processes should result in a peculiar disposition to consider one's self very wise and decidedly worth listening to, appears to be mathematically demonstrable. It looks, then, as if the self-conceit, the impatience of observation and advice, the rejection of all unpleasant truths, the resolute credulity of their own fancies which the war brought so glaringly into light amongst the mass of Frenchmen, may, not unreasonably, be partially explained by the accumulated effects of years of idle talking. It would be exaggeration to assign too much importance to such a cause; but that it has had some hand in the demoralisation of the nation does appear to be very likely. For social purposes, as a provocative of friendly association, as a gilder of home life, and even, in certain cases, as a stimulant of talent and of natural eloquence, perpetual talking is defensible; but judged by the other effects which it may be presumed to have produced in France, it does harm both morally and politically, and it is more than doubtful whether that harm is compensated by the advantages gained in other directions.

A reservation must, however, be expressed before we leave this part of the question. There are some Frenchmen who do not talk, and some Frenchwomen too. Not that they are exactly silent—that adjective never can apply to them; but relatively, they hold their tongues. They speak when they have something to say, but they are not always speaking; their mouth is not, like most of the mouths around them, a *moulin à paroles*. Such accidental cases can, however, scarcely be attributed to the interference of reason; they are brought about by personal causes

rather than by reflection. They may be attributable to indolence, or ill-health, or stupidity, or bashfulness (the latter explanation must, however, be rare); but it would not be easy to find many examples in which moderate talking is an evident consequence of the employment of intelligence and free election. Still, whatever be their origin, these exceptions do exist; and, strange as it may appear, there positively are French people who are capable of sitting for a whole evening without opening their lips, unless it be to yawn or drink *tilleul*.

If we turn from the aspects of the subject as a whole to the details of wording and of phrasing which make up familiar talk, we find in them differences from our own expressions which, though relatively few in number, suffice to indicate marked contrasts of form and thought, and even of national habits. These differences merit examination, not only for the sake of satisfying curiosity, but because, when they are real, and not merely external, they lead us to inquire why idioms differ between close neighbours, what is likely to be the influence on French minds of certain particular locutions which the French employ, and what is the evidence of their condition which results therefrom. The needs of modern nations are growing so much alike, there is everywhere such a disposition to import each other's technicalities when they supply a new necessity, that radical peculiarities in single words are becoming somewhat rare. "Pudding," "comfort," "cold cream," and "rail" have become French within our generation, while we have borrowed back *vis-à-vis*, *ennui*, *protégé*, *chignon*, and *chaperon*. Yet there are still gaps on both sides, and some of them are of a nature to make both sides stop to think a little. For instance, the French

language contains no such word as "sober." It possesses the positive expressions "drunk" and "tipsy," which are literally conveyed by *ivre* and *gris*; but our negative denomination "sober" has no existence across the Channel. *Sobre* is in no degree its counterpart; the meanings of the two words are absolutely different. The French one is translatable solely by "temperate" or "abstemious;" never can it or any other Gallic syllables be made to signify the opposite condition to intoxication. The entire absence of any word descriptive of that state, is in itself an argument and a declaration. The English drink enough to need a special illustrative title for a man who has not drunk; the French, though the Parisians did begin to largely swallow alcohol during the two sieges, have never yet felt the necessity of forming any such curious subjective appellation, consequently they have not got it. Here is, surely, an evidence of character betrayed by language. A second odd example is the total absence, in French, of any word equivalent to "listener." It seems hardly credible that, with thirty-seven million of talkers, no provision, other than the cumbersome paraphrase, *celui qui écoute*, should have been made for auditors. The only interpretation of so odd a blank lies in the supposition that each Frenchman chatters for himself, not for others; and that, not caring whether he is listened to or not, he has never recognised that he has no denomination for the person to whom he speaks. He has the verb *écouter*, but no corresponding substantive. In the same way he can say "to teach," but he cannot express "teacher." Another singularly suggestive vacancy exists in all the dictionaries opposite the eminently British adjective "dowdy." No

Frenchwoman ever merited that epithet. Call her all the hard names you like, "dowdy," at all events, will never come into your head or hers. The notion it conveys is so foreign to her comprehension, that there is no practicable channel for communicating our interpretation of it to her. And who ever saw a "genteel" Frenchwoman? And who ever saw one "giggle?" Neither those odious words, nor the still more odious ideas which they convey, exist beyond Dover Straits. But if France owns these enviable privileges, she pays for them in the utter want of "gentleman." She has, however, the goodness to recognise her insufficiency, and to absorb the word from us, telling us, possibly with some truth, that she does so because a gentleman is so essentially modern an invention that she has had no time, in the middle of her revolutions, to compose her own word for it. And again, though the change of subject is rather wide, no Frenchman can understand what on earth we mean by that omnipresent, universal, elastic "stuff," which, with us, indicates nearly everything which language can convey, materially, morally, and intellectually. We never stop to think about it; but if we did, surely we should be humiliated at the poverty of invention which has led us to assign such an infinite variety of signification to that one wretched monosyllable.

There are not very many more words than these which cannot somehow be rendered out of English; but there is a second category of expressions where all the advantage lies on our side, because, though they can be translated with more or less exactness, they have a merit and precision in Anglo-Saxon which their representatives in French in no degree possess. Such are, in

verbs,—shrivel, dabble, baffle, jerk, coax, ride, trample, smoulder, trickle, scowl, stare, and huddle; in adjectives,—bleak, dreary, grim, forlorn, neat, dutiful, few, snug, and flimsy; in substantives,—rustle, ripple, bloom, gloom, sneak, sheen, and quibble. These examples, which are put down at hazard, will serve to show what is the class of words in which we excel; and the evidence will become clearer still if we compare some of them with their French equivalents. *Frou-frou* is a pretty sound, but never did it suggest the crisp echoes of moving silk as "rustle" does; "mounting on a horse" may be a grammatical definition, but "riding" says the same thing with very different vigour; "trickle" talks to us so cunningly of slow falling drops that we can almost see and hear them, but *couler* or *dégoutter* rouse no such imagination in us; *morne* perhaps does come nearly up to "dreary," and that is a vast deal to say, for the latter is a word of prodigious significance, but it is the only exception worth mentioning in the list; *regarder* or *dévisager* will not do for "stare;" *fleur* is indeed a poor substitute for "bloom;" *faire une mine rechignée* can scarcely be said to come up to "scowl;" *délaissé* does not translate "forlorn;" *obéissant et respectueux* does not express our idea of "dutiful." In all these cases, and in many others like them, the advantage is on our side. It continues with us in such phrases as "raw weather," "sandy hair," in which the adjectives are used with the happiest audacity; and in such words as stately, listless, lonely, somehow, scramble, twang, and scribble, which are all full of merit. If we want to say "kick" in French, we must resort to the eminently oblique expression, "give a blow of the foot;" but if we have to indi-

cate narrowness, shortness, flatness, or tightness, we find, to our consternation, that we cannot say them at all; they are absolutely inexpressible in any form whatever. In moments of such distress as this one is tempted to regret that the French have not adopted the German system of converting verbs and adjectives into substantives when wanted, so that we might help ourselves to a new word to fill the vacant place.

In quoting these examples, the object is not to show what a great language English is—we are all of us sufficiently convinced of that already—but to indicate the exact nature of the gaps in French. The catalogue might be extended: with time, and patience, and much comparison, it might possibly be carried up to a hundred words; but that is certainly a maximum—it is the utmost limit of our advantage. Our strength lies in such of our words as are purely Anglo-Saxon (it will be noticed that Latin origins contribute nothing to the list), and it takes the form of fine shades of meaning rather than of monopoly of idea. With the exception of a few words—a dozen, perhaps, in all—the French can say all that we can, only we can say it better in the particular cases which have been enumerated here. We have not much reason to be proud of that, for our language has been made up by public subscription: several sources have contributed to it; we have received donations in abundance; we have pillaged where foreign charity has ceased to supply us. And we have done very right. The object of all language is to become copious and expressive. We have pursued that object; and though our descendants in the New World show us every day that additions to our common stock can still be made, we have attained a remarkable suffi-

ciency by the employment of mixtures, absorptions, loans, and robbery.

French is, on the contrary, a relatively pure language. There has been but one great graft on the original tree. The French have not gone about the world as we have done—they have stopped at home; and the perfecting of their language has been wrought out almost entirely by internal development alone since the Romans introduced Latin into Gaul. This is another reason why their talking, as it now stands, should be indicative of their character. It is their own work; it has been virtually free from extraneous action. Until the last few years, and then only within the limits of special technicalities, its neologisms have not been borrowed—they have been invented out of the home stock. French consequently represents the French far more exactly than English represents the English. Its merits and its defects are properly its own, for some sixteen centuries have passed since a new element has been infused into it. During that long period it has slowly grown to what it is, unaided from abroad, excepting in the narrow frontier districts, where neighbouring tongues have influenced local forms. If then we find, as certainly we do, that, on the whole, it is a somewhat richer language than our own, we ought to be thereby disposed to recognise that the French, though unassisted from the outside (and perhaps for that very reason), have developed their language more than we have done. Their constant need and constant use of it have, however, naturally contributed to this result. But we do not observe in French in greater abundance than in English, words of which it has an absolute monopoly. As examples of such words we may mention

chef-d'œuvre, à propos, maniéré, panaché, vogue, endimanché, chaussure, all which are untranslatable. But where the wealth really lies is in the large number of finely-shaded significations, whose precision and delicacy are unapproachable by the corresponding terms which exist in English. Of this class there are hundreds of examples, but they must be felt,—they cannot be described. To give a catalogue of them would be both wearisome and useless; a few illustrations may, however, be found in such verbs as *accaparer, talonner, effleurer, s'acharner, tisonner, abîmer*; such adjectives as *flou, flasque, maniéré, hérissé, blasé, guindé, dépareillé, maussade*; such substantives as *convenance, tripotage, débacle, badaud, bêtise, débris, malaise*,—all of which, and crowds of others like them, are vastly fuller of suggestive meaning, as well as of scrupulous exactness, than anything we can pair with them. Indeed it is one of the marked characters of French, that its words, especially its verbs, are not only numerous, but singularly happy in the precision of their sense; and as the language is furthermore most copiously supplied with approximate synonyms, the result is, that well-spoken French attains a descriptive force of which our phrase “word-painting” supplies few examples in our own tongue. This doctrine will naturally be disputed; but it should be remembered that it can only be fairly judged by such of us as possess an equal habit of both languages, and can consequently accurately weigh their comparative value. There is no doubt that each possesses certain superiorities. It seems, for instance, to be very likely that even those who would give the preference to French for speaking, might incline to think that English is a better vehicle

for writing; but it is probable that if an unprejudiced jury could be constituted, composed of persons really capable to decide, its verdict would be in favour of French as a medium of perfect conversation.

In addition to the examples which have just been given, there are certain other richnesses of French which cannot be passed over without observation, for their employment is so continuous that they are heard all day and everywhere, and form almost an element of life. The sweet little exclamation *dame* is never out of the women's mouths; and though men use it too, it has so feminine a character that they ought to be forbidden to employ it. It expresses such a quantity of hesitations, such a mist of elastic doubt, such a haze of incredulous uncertainty, that it is scarcely possible to convey its meaning. “Really I have no idea,” “it is though,” “let me think about it,” “I’ll tell you presently,” and “what do you think yourself?” all rolled together, would supply no adequate equivalent for this prodigious syllable. It is a language in itself, and its universality is not open to the accusation which was just now brought against the omnipresent English “stuff,” because that much-misapplied noun is supposed to be descriptive in every sense which is assigned to it, while *dame* is purely ejaculatory, and may therefore, without inconsistency, signify whatever you like. The duplication of certain words is another peculiarity which should be noticed. *Jour* becomes *journée* when the duration of the daytime and not the day itself is to be conveyed. So is it again with *an* and *année, matin* and *matinée, soir* and *soirée*. *Si* is substituted for *oui*, if an affirmative reply is to be given to a question suggesting doubt, or if a previous *oui* has

not carried conviction with it: to "Is it raining?" the answer would be *oui*; to "It is not raining, is it?" it would be *si*. New is expressed by *nouveau* if it refers to something which is commencing, by *neuf* if the something has not been used before. Number is called *numero* to express a figure, *nombre* to express a quantity. Before is conveyed by *devant* if it be a question of position, by *avant* if it be a question of time. Stalk becomes *queue* if it be a single stem, *raisin* if it be a bunch, like grapes or currants. We have but the one phrase "dozen;" the French have, *dizaine*, *douzaine*, *quinzaine*, *vingtaine*, and so on up to *centaine*. *En amont* means up the current of a stream; *en aval* is down the river. "More" is expressed by *plus* or *davantage*, according to variations of signification which it would be a waste of space to go into here. The French say *se moucher*, *se gâter*, *se chauffer*, all which ideas are expressed by us in the most lumbering forms of speech. Again, what words have we for *verglas*,—that peculiar state in which roads become like glass from frost; for *contre-coup*, for *séduisant*, for *famélique*, and *recherché*? So we might go on for half an hour.

In terms of tenderness and affection French is, however, singularly poor. It contains absolutely nothing which is susceptible of being compared to our most admirable "darling." It has absurd denominations supposed to be suggestive of much love—but so have we; and there is not much to choose between the ridiculous inexpressiveness of duck and pet on our side, or of "little cabbage" and "little rabbit" on the other. Where France, and indeed all Europe, beats us, is in that adorable *tutoiement*, that sweet use of "thou," which marks out so sharp a line between those we really love and the

chilly world outside. There is no explaining to an Englishman what *tutoiement* means; there is no suggesting to him what a depth of fondness is contained in *tu*. When the subtle intensity of its sweetness has penetrated to our heart, we stare with wonder at the unhappy people who say *you* to wife and child; from our soul we pity them, and wonder whether they really think that "you" means love. To real Englishmen, to the insular thorough Britisher, this will look like folly; but let him ask Europe what *tutoiement* means, what is the inland sea of tenderness which it encloses; let him consult such friends as have lived in sufficient contact with foreign friendships to be able to measure "you" and "thou" (the language hardly matters, for *tu* lives everywhere outside our chalk cliffs); let him try to realise the profound, the limitless distinction which the exclusive use towards those we cherish of so marked a form of speech must necessarily establish,—and then, perchance, he may admit that "there is something in it." Indeed there is. To gain the consciousness of what *tutoiement* means it is worth while to live for years abroad—just as a voyage across the Atlantic is well paid for by the sight of Niagara Falls; it is a new sense which we acquire. It compensates for that incredible deficiency of French, the absence of distinct words for love and like; but the deficiency is evident to all England, while the compensation is appreciable only by a small minority amongst us.

In consequence of the general precision of its terms, French is a good language for the expression of distinct definitions; but, at the same time, the genius of the race inclines it to the employment of insinuations. No people are so able as the French to imply in-

directly what they do not choose to say point-blank. But that is a peculiarity of their nature rather than of their language. Their words are for the most part absolute; but notwithstanding that, their talk is suggestive rather than declarative. The idioms which are at their disposal enable them to define with singular exactness, but the tendency of their character leads certainly the other way, and their ordinary disposition in conversation is to convey their meaning by implication and not to give it outright. Of course this sort of phrasing is limited to cases where it does not weaken the effect which the speaker wishes to produce; but as those cases are very frequent, it is heard continually. And yet it seems at first to be out of place; for it is not easy to comprehend why distinctness should so often be avoided, and why suggestion should be put forward in its stead. The explanation evidently lies in the love of talk, in the disposition to make talking last, and in the consequent disinclination to employ short definitions. It needs some skill to avoid using terms which would use up our ideas too rapidly; but the result is reached throughout the eighty-six departments (the loss of Alsace-Lorraine has brought back the number to what it was before the annexation of Nice and Savoy). Plenty of examples might be given of the difficulty which is here overcome, but one will suffice to show its nature. There are eight main words in French which express the various forms of fear; each has its own peculiar sense: *alarme* springs from what we learn, *effroi* from what we see, *terreur* from what we imagine, *frayeur* from what surprises us, *épouvante* from what we take for granted, *crainte* from what

we know, *peur* from the opinions which we entertain, *appréhension* from what we anticipate. Well, despite the critical precision of these varied meanings, the French, especially the women, have a habit of dancing round them all, and of using subterfuges, shades, and parables, which illustrate the sentiment of fear in all sorts of other ways. This is incontestably a talent, but it may be doubted whether it constitutes an advantage. It implies ability, or rather handiness in the speaker, but it does not show the merit of the language. It necessarily stimulates the manufacture of neologisms, and it may be that the numerical abundance of French words is due, in some degree, to this unceasing cause. It cannot, however, be denied, that such a disposition improves the talking power of all those who act upon it; for its first effect is to oblige them to seek new clothes for old ideas, new frames for well-known pictures. A people which is always talking, and which is perpetually inventing fresh expressions, because its character tempts it away from those which exist already, must inevitably attain two principal results: it must learn to talk, and it must extend its dictionary. In Paris there is a never-ending fabrication of new words—each year brings out a dozen of them; some die away immediately, others live and become definitely adopted. Most of them, however, are in their origin slang expressions, which only acquire their naturalisation in daily talk after time and habit have slowly purged them of their first meaning, and have rendered them acceptable to public usage in a modified form.

One enormous difference between French and English lies in the odd fact, that whereas we absorb with unhesitating readiness all the ex-

pressive phrases we can get hold of (we have gone on doing so for a thousand years), the French do not bring into general circulation any of the local sayings which have existed in their provinces for centuries, indisputably good as many of them are. The Normandy cidermakers, who, of course, are never satisfied with their crop of apples, say, when they are asked what sort of a year it is for them, "*Pour une année où il n'y a pas de pommes il y a des pommes; mais pour une année où il y a des pommes, il n'y a pas de pommes.*" The Provence olive-growers use the same odd comparison in a still more striking form: their words are, "*Dire qu'il n'y en a pas, il y a; mais dire qu'il y en a, il n'y en a pas.*" Well, these wonderful expressions, full as they are of force and vigour and fantastic truth—and there are many others like them—are scarcely known outside the frontiers of the districts where they were invented. They languish in country villages, unknown to the sharp people who set new inventions going on the asphalt outside Tortoni's door. Yet they have more figurative value than nine-tenths of the absurd novelties which crawl into circulation because they have been edited at the Vaudeville or the Palais Royal, and they are worth quite as much as the average of the Yankeeisms which we lay hands on here the moment they are imported. The reason of their exclusion is, that Paris holds so inveterately to its supposed rights as a capital, that it refuses to endorse what it has not invented; and as nothing goes down in France without its stamp, the whole mass of outside cleverness is thereby shut out from any participation in the development of French, excepting in so far as purely local usages are concerned. But if any discontented mind, do-

miciled between the Rue de Richelieu and the Madeleine, objects to the old phrase *très cherché* as being incomplete, and suggests that *très trouvé* should be adopted in its place, he will find a crowd of approving listeners, who will exclaim, "How well imagined that is! *Très cherché* implied only that the result was looked for, and in no way indicated that it was attained; *très trouvé*, on the contrary, contains internal evidence that the end is reached: *vive très trouvé!*" So *très trouvé* immediately becomes French, and travels by the first train into the expectant and obedient country districts, where it is at once employed because it comes from Paris. This may be a small sign, but it helps to show that though the National Assembly may linger at Versailles it will not manage to decapitalise Paris, in our time at all events. Lyons is a big place, and so is Bordeaux, but what influence have they on French? Even Marseille, with its droll exaggerations and its southern fancies, does no more than furnish stories at which Paris sometimes condescends to smile, but to which it does not grant the privilege of incorporation into its own special circulation.

As regards pronunciation, the ancient privilege of Touraine still exists in undiminished force. The peasants and their children talk French there as it is heard in no other part of France; their enunciation and their intonation are so pure, that one listens to them for the first time with a feeling of half-incredulous bewilderment. No Parisienne speaks with such delicacy of articulation, or such critical truth of accent. The district in which this rare excellence is attained begins at Orleans and ends at Tours. Blois occupies its centre; and it is in and round that dull old town that the most

absolute perfection is attained. The children who make dirt-pies on the borders of the Loire, pronounce far better than the actors at the Théâtre Français. There has never been an orator in the Chamber, or in the pulpit of Nôtre Dame, who has spoken French as they do; and yet the little rascals have no idea of it. It is positively humiliating to chat with them, for you cannot get rid of the unpleasant feeling that a baby of five years old is giving you a lesson. Elsewhere it is all *patois*. Railways may end by levelling out the differences of speech in France, as they have already levelled dress and prices; but, thus far, the *patois* of each district remains intact, with all its essences and colours. In the country of the old *langue d'oïl* there are still twelve *patois*, of which the Breton, the Normand, the Poitevin, and the Champenois are the chief; in the provinces where once the *langue d'oc* was spoken, we have the Provençal, the Auvergnat, the Limousin, and others. Altogether there are more than twenty of them, without counting the local subdivisions, which are as numerous as the varied shapes of the caps which the village women wear. Some of them are languages in themselves. No Frenchman, properly so called, can understand the private talk of the Breton peasants when they come in pilgrimage to St Anne d'Auray; or of the dock labourers at Marseille; or of the goat-herds of the Valley d'Ossau, when they meet, beneath the shade of the Pic du Midi, at their annual festival at Laruns. And yet these dialects are all so local, they are so pitilessly shut inside a circle, that they exercise no kind of influence, however slight, on the French around them. Even the Spanish tendencies which leak across the Basque frontier, and the vile Italian which struggles along

the borders of the Var, do not penetrate ten miles—French battles with them, and drives them back discomfited. The fact is that France is a country of strong unity, utterly unlike its neighbours, and having no small contempt for them; so, when they try to push in the wedge of their insinuating tongue, France rejects them resolutely. Even on those now conquered hillsides which slope downwards to the Rhine, German had been replaced by what was called Alsatian—an odious form of speech it was, but its speakers loved France enough to fancy that they were talking French. To-day they have to relapse to German, and they do not like it.

For foreigners French is not a hard language to pronounce, approximately at least. But each nationality brings its own accent into it, the English being perhaps the most copiously supplied therewith. The *oi oi* of the Britisher is a distinctive mark, which he finds it difficult to efface. He has no suspicion that it exists; but "*l'accent Anglais*" is so largely practised about France, that the French, at all events, well know its peculiar sound, and have some trouble in comprehending that the English do not hear it themselves with the same distinctness. But they do not; they go on talking, "not French of Paris, but French of Stratford-on-Bow-Town," as Chaucer put it some time ago, with a placidity and a confidence worthy of a better end. There must be, in a good many of us, something which altogether rebels against other tongues, for it is only amongst ourselves that cases can be found of persons who have lived regularly for thirty years in France, and who, at the end of that long period, say "*le peuple Français*;" and are so incapable of distinguishing between the sound of *voleur* and

velours, that they pronounce both alike as "*vollours*." These examples are rigorously true, and many more like them might be cited. Our great difficulty is, that we talk mainly from the middle of the mouth, while the French form their sounds in front, close against the teeth. When we have acquired the same habit, we have got half-way towards speaking French; until we have acquired it our chance is hopeless. As, however, most of us do not particularly care whether we speak well or badly, it is scarcely to be expected that we shall take the trouble which this implies. We argue that, after all, French is only one of the two thousand languages which have grown up since Babel separated us into nations, and that it is only under special circumstances that it becomes essential to know it really well. This consideration appears to us to be an excuse for our indifference.

To the French themselves the question takes a different form. To them it seems that they possess the great language of humanity, the essential vehicle of thought, the natural expresser of grace and courtesy and wit. They urge that this view has been adopted by other countries; that French has been raised, with the consent of Europe, to a sort of international position, for which it was recognised to be peculiarly fitted in consequence of its own merits, and of the political and literary influence which it represented. History, "the witness of time, the messenger of antiquity," certainly confirms this argument. It shows us that French has gradually reached a place and obtained a power which no other language has acquired since Latin died away. Its universality and its precision have combined to render it the adopted channel of European communication, not only

for public purposes, but also to a great extent for social and daily wants. Even the results of the late war, far spreading as they are, seem scarcely likely to affect the empire which the French language has attained during the two last centuries. German has not the qualities to which the Continental world has grown accustomed by its long handling of French. No other tongue can pretend to dispute the mastery; we may consequently expect to see French retain its ground, unweakened if not unassailed. Prince Bismark's resolution to recognise it no longer as the accepted organ of diplomacy will have but small effect now that the upper classes of all Europe learn it as the first condition of their education. The true interest of its influence lies, however, inside the boundaries of its native land. Its force beyond those limits may constitute a question for the world at large; but its action within the frontiers is all that France itself need care for, and is all that we have to look at. The sketch which has been given here of its uses and peculiarities will probably suffice, incomplete and shadowy as it is, to show that it is a language which, by its special nature, and by the unbroken continuity of its employment, can scarcely fail to produce distinct effects on those who speak it. It may be so with all other tongues; but if it be true of them, it must assuredly be still more true of French. Its abundance, its precision, its graceful forms, handled by a whole nation of dexterous, inventive speakers, constitute the best talking instrument we know of; that is tolerably evident. But how does it react on its proprietor? what is its real share in the constitution of national character and of home life in France?

Answers to questions such as

these can only be suggested ; they cannot be put forward with any certainty, or with any expectation that they will carry conviction to those who hear them. The very principle of the possible effect of language on those who use it all day long may be rejected by many persons as an exaggeration or even an absurdity. And yet, in the case before us, it is very difficult to doubt, after a real examination of French habits, that they are gravely influenced by the need of talk, and by the practices which that need provokes. To what other cause can we logically assign the marked disposition of the French to seek each other in all the varying shapes which society can take ? Why do they go to *cafés*, and sit together beneath the trees, and establish public meeting-places, and pay evening visits, and make acquaintance with almost every one they meet ? The explanation which most English people will probably incline to give is, that all this happens because they are too frivolous, too incapable of sufficing singly for their needs, to be able to stop alone. That theory is spiteful, but untrue. The French are generally competent to get through their time without side aid ; but they are so resolutely convinced that mankind was not made for solitude, that its destiny is to mix and talk and laugh, that they imagine they are discharging one of the duties of humanity in flocking constantly together. But there would be no use in that if they did not talk : they do not meet to gaze in silence at each other ; if such were the object held out to them, they would most certainly stay at home, for they are not gregarious, but communicative. May it not, then, be urged that it is the thirst for talk which induces all the rest, and that the outdoor habits of the

people flow naturally from that main source ? If this be granted, at all events as a probability, it becomes somewhat more easy to follow up the developments of the question. If talk be recognised as a general object and a natural occupation, if the longing for it be the true explanation of the marked social tendencies of the French, if their customs are largely guided by the satisfaction of that longing, it would seem to ensue, almost necessarily, that character as well as customs must be operated on by the same wide-spreading cause. But if so, this further influence would be produced rather by the nature and composition of the talk than by the simple fact of its existence ; and thus it is that the peculiarities of language would come into play, and would work out their consequence.

That consequence would seem to assume several forms. The first of these is a disposition to be excessive in the expression of most of the ordinary feelings. The French generally speak with vehemence ; they use strong phrases and copious epithets ; they pile up description and imaginative colouring, and so get often led away beyond the exactness which more moderation would maintain. This, however, would not be possible if the words at their disposal did not lend themselves to such a service. It is not, therefore, a mere product of excitability of nature, it is also, and in a great degree, a fruit of the language used, which leads on by its abundance and stimulates by its powers of strong shading. Another and still more marked effect of French in those who speak it as a native tongue, is to place at their command such innumerable and admirable means of being polite, that it would be strange indeed if they resisted the temptation. That French manners have

been in part nursed up to what they are by the direct action of the language in facilitating the extremes of courtesy, is an argument which will generally be admitted, and which would alone suffice, so evident does it seem, to give some reason to the theory which is advocated here, of the influence of talk on character. A third result, though less distinctly traceable, is the fostering of gaiety by bright sentences and sunny words. French wit is a very different thing from English humour; it is based on insinuation, suggestion, and comparison, and could have no existence, in its special form, if language did not aid it. This is distinctly provable by the difficulty, if not impossibility, of translating French *esprit*; it cannot live or be in any other tongue. Whether the faculty of analysis, of separating and grouping ideas, of assigning its exact measure to each element of a subject, is better exercised in French than in other idioms, is one of those wide, open questions which it is scarcely prudent to discuss; they lead too far. But it may

be indicated as meriting some consideration; for, to such of us as are disposed to answer it in the affirmative, it would serve as an additional witness in support of the hypothesis which we are suggesting.

And even if this hypothesis be a dream; even if language drips over us without leaving a trace of its constant passage; even if it possesses no kind of action, no sort of influence over nations who could not live without it; even if French qualities and French defects are solely brought about by personal internal movements with which language has no connection, — even then we can scarcely fail to own that, reduced to the rôle of a passive instrument of speech, with no power and no authority of its own, French is a singularly winning and attractive tongue, which is marvellously well dealt in by its owners. None of us would consent to exchange English for it; but many of us would say, in imitation of the Frenchman's compliment to England, "If English were not my language, I should wish that French were."

A TRUE REFORMER.—PART III.

CHAPTER VIII.—A GLIMPSE OF A SPANISH CASTLE.

As we sat at dinner by a window of the well-filled ladies' coffee-room in the Belgravia Hotel, which apartment we chose in preference to dining alone, on that first summer's evening, and watched the carriages go by with their occupants bound to the opera or other entertainments, I think Eva, notwithstanding her fatigue, shared in my elation of feeling, induced by the bright summer weather and the liveliness of the scene both within and without, and she appeared in better spirits than at any time since we left Sirmoori. The evening dress of many of the gentlemen dining at the other tables, and the opera-cloaks of their companions, showed that they too were bound to some place of amusement, and we felt as if our honeymoon trip was about to begin. Hitherto all had been suffering on her part, and anxiety on mine: we might now look forward to a little unadulterated pleasure; and, but that she was too tired, we should have followed the example set all round, and then and there gone off to the opera too. Eva, however, was clearly unequal to more present exertion, and retired to her room immediately after dinner, while I strolled forth to renew my acquaintance with the scenes I had not seen for so many years, and to walk down the elation of spirits which made rest impossible. And truly, if ever a man had apology for exaltation of feeling, I was that one. Relieved from a hopeless state of debt, with the ban of exile attaching to it; possessor of a handsome fortune, and the prettiest girl in the world for a wife, whose sweet face had never for an instant been clouded by a shade of ill temper, and all

whose thoughts were gentle and womanly; a holiday before us so long that no thought of its end need rise to disturb the pleasure of the moment,—all these things heaped upon me in half-a-dozen weeks: as I paced the street smoking my cigar, I felt how extraordinary, and also how utterly undeserved, had been this stroke of fortune. All this good luck, too, had befallen without any drawback attached in the way of sacrifice of my military career. On the contrary, it would be easy now to exchange to a battery at home; and sweet would be garrison life in a crack troop even at Aldershot, or in Ireland, as compared with duty in a monotonous Indian cantonment. I smile now to think of the excitement produced by this arrival at a noisy London caravansera, and the prospects of duty in the Long Valley or the Phoenix; but everything is comparative. Yet I must add that in reality rest and idleness, or even garrison life with a turn of field-days in the lovely spots just mentioned, were the last things I was actually looking forward to.

With all these feelings of exaltation, a sense of our curious loneliness came over me. My poor mother—the faithful guardian of infancy, the sympathising companion of boyhood, the enthusiastic admirer of later deeds, who thought me a miracle of talent because at Addiscombe I achieved a moderate place in the artillery, and regarded my first appointment to the Horse Artillery as a special testimony to my surpassing merits as a soldier, much as if such a thing had never happened to a subaltern before—she, alas! was no longer here to partake of the good

fortune which would have gratified her even more than it did me. Nor had I a single near relation. Eva's stock of that commodity in England was limited to her younger sister and the two maiden aunts in the country; and as we had come almost as fast as the mails, we had not written beforehand to announce the specific date of arrival. The first impulse with most men returning to England would have been to send for their letters, but I did not expect any; the next to go off to their clubs, but I did not yet belong to one. Not expecting to come home, my name had been put down at the Union Jack only about seven years before, and so would not come up for ballot for some time yet. In default of this attraction, I bent my steps towards Westminster, and strolled into the great hall. The portals at the end apparently lay open to the public, judging from the numbers of comers and goers; and although a policeman made at first a feint of stopping me, I was allowed to proceed up to what I had no difficulty in recognising, from a well-known engraving, as the lobby of the House of Commons. Although it was nearly ten o'clock, the place was pretty full of people pottering about—much as one would expect to see them outside a court-house while waiting for a verdict in an interesting trial. Members were coming in and out, and, thanks to photography, it was easy to distinguish several of the celebrities. Mr Merrifield, among others, passed out towards some mysterious side-room in eager conversation with another member; and shortly afterwards Mr Braham, large, solemn, mysterious, and well-dressed; but all of them looking, strange to say, much like other human beings.

I noticed what seemed an incongruous feature in this elaborately-decorated hall, a shabby stall in the corner, whereon were displayed a

plateful of conventional buns, some unwholesome-looking pork-pies, and portions of rice-pudding, of the kind ill affected by schoolboys, distributed in shabby tea-cups. The notion of supplying refreshments to the weary lobby-waiters was apparently a happy afterthought, which had not suggested itself to the architect, but had been left for subsequent consideration to supply, the distinction proper between the lower order of beings for whose benefit they were furnished, and the happy mortals to whom these charmed portals are open, being properly signified by the quality of the viands. But yet, surely there is no mistaking that face, that shaggy eyebrow and sagacious mouth, of the tall short-sighted man who, having just consumed a portion of pork-pie and a tea-cup of pudding, finishes his appetising supper with a currant-bun and a pint of bottled ale. To ascertain if this be so is worth the price of a glass of sherry. "Yes," said the man who served it, "that is the Right Honourable Thomas Sinnick. Yes, of course, this is the members' refreshment stall, but any private party is allowed to make use of it likewise." Well, then, Cabinet Ministers are evidently just like ordinary mortals, except that they seem to be blessed with extraordinary digestions; and I wondered how much of the damage set down to the wear and tear of Parliamentary life must really be due to the tricks members play with their stomachs. But while pondering on the incongruity of this shabby stall in the splendid lobby, and the fact that the assembly which professes to administer all the affairs of the nation could not do better for the sustenance of its own body than supply pork-pies and currant-buns, a bell-rings, there is a certain commotion, and the onlookers are thrust unceremoniously into an outer hall.

"Only fancy," said some one by me, "a division on old Falconer's motion, and here is half-past ten; I doubt if the bill will come on to-night."

Just then I noticed a gentleman, who, having advanced confidently up the hall, was ignominiously thrust on one side by a burly policeman, and on his turning round, I recognised a personage who had lately held an exalted position in India, next only indeed to the Lord High Commissioner's, the dispenser of unlimited patronage, the confirmer of sentences on evil-doers, the preceded on public occasions by four aides-de-camp.

"Ha! Captain West," said he, on recognising me, "have you come home? Glad to meet you again. You see," said he, smiling, "Parliamentary officials are no respecter of persons. They act as if they represented the authority of the nation, and were responsible to nobody. This is the sort of thing we must expect all round when the days of a republic come upon us."

"So it seems, indeed," I replied; "but I suppose your Excellency" (excuse my blunder, but I was forgetting we are not still in India) "means to find a place here before long?"

"Well, I don't know," said the old gentleman; "I suspect there is not much use beginning with this sort of work at my time of life; but clearly the world is divided into two classes—the men who are in Parliament, and the men who are not. But if a few young fellows like you, now, who know all the ins and outs of army business, were to get into the House, there would be some use in it. It's quite distressing to see the ignorance there is about military affairs. I have no doubt there will be any quantity of nonsense talked to-night."

"What, then, is the debate about?" said I, blushing at his chance allusion to my secret desires.

"The second reading of the Army Bill, to be sure (army bills are a standing dish nowadays)—that is, if there is time for it to come on to-night."

Just then the strangers began to move in again, and so Sir Philip passed on, while I, much ruminating, turned my steps homewards. Clearly there is no time to be lost, if my castle in the air is ever to become a reality, after all the risks, too, that have been run on account of it.

CHAPTER IX.—ON BUSINESS.

Next morning we felt inclined to dally an indefinite time over breakfast (and I am bound to say the attendance at the Belgravia is competent to work up to any point of dilatoriness on the part of the visitors), the sense of rest after the journey was so great, and the pleasure of watching Eva, now beginning to look fresh and bright again, no longer oppressed and weary with travel. But business must be done. The first thing in this way was of course to visit one's tailor, the next to go to the city and make acquaint-

ance with Messrs Paterson & Co. There was a difficulty at first as to what to do for Eva, who had never been left alone for so long since we were married; but she declared unpacking would be full occupation, and then Sybil and her aunts had to be written to; so it was agreed she should remain at the hotel while I went to the city, and that then we would go shopping together in the afternoon—for of course Eva also wanted a lot of things—and wind up by a visit to the opera in the evening.

Ah me ! There is a melancholy pleasure in recalling the sweet anxiety of these first days of our English honeymoon ! Affairs of state have taken far less trouble to settle than the little details which had now to be arranged from hour to hour for my young wife's comfort and our joint pleasure. A summons to Windsor has caused less excitement than did the anticipation of this first visit to the opera.

A visit to St James's Street, where the pressing requirements had to be supplied which every man must need who has not had the run of a tailor's shop for a dozen years, and a call at a music-seller's for the opera tickets, made it noon when I got to Gracechurch Street, and I confess to feeling some perturbation as I drew near to the lawyers' chambers, and to a sensation of relief on seeing the name of Paterson, Herries, & Crouch, conspicuous on one of a number of plates, at the entrance of a large block of new offices. I had taken the precaution of sending word early in the morning by a messenger of my intended visit, and found Mr Paterson waiting to receive me ; a little elderly man with a slightly Scotch accent, a shrewd face, a rather slow manner, and a very obvious wig. After a few minutes spent over inquiries about Eva's health, our voyage, and so forth, we fell at once to the business in hand, and he proceeded to explain various particulars about my uncle and my succession to his fortune. They had been friends from boyhood, it appeared, having been articled pupils to the same firm. My uncle followed the profession for some years, but gave up practice on inheriting a fortune of thirty thousand pounds, in his case also from an uncle. From this time he retained an office in the city, but his principal employment was dabbling in shares and securities, a process which afforded him

apparently constant occupation and amusement, and by which he generally made a few hundreds a-year. The increase in his fortune was, however, mainly due to the savings resulting from economical habits ; and when he died it was considerably more than double the original sum, distributed among an immense variety of investments. Thus had been passed a thoroughly respectable, and, it must be added, useless life—recreations in the share market being diversified by the occupation of angling on the Thames, a pursuit to which he was almost equally devoted, and which absorbed all the time not spent in the city. This was his life for ten months of every year, broken only by an annual bout of salmon-fishing in Scotland, which, strange to say, did not have the effect of diminishing his fondness for angling in a punt. "I often," said Mr Paterson, "turned the conversation to his relatives, at times when he would be dining and sleeping at my house, or when I have been staying down at Twickenham with him, but he usually turned the conversation to something else. Your uncle was a reserved man always, but he grew more so as he grew older, and was especially reserved on this point. Last November he had a very sharp chest attack, and sent for me to go down to Twickenham. 'I feel as if it would go hard with me, Paterson,' said he, 'and I can see my doctor looks anxious ; I think I ought to make my will.' This was the first intimation he had ever given me that no will was made ; and but that I knew from experience this is the one thing about which even the most business-like men are often unbusiness-like, I should have been more surprised than I was. I quite agreed with him that he should do so without loss of time, and presumed he wished me to draw the will. Yes, he de-

sired this, but was in doubt about the disposition of his property. What, I asked, were his general ideas, as to dividing it among relatives or leaving it to one heir? Well, he said, he rather thought of bequeathing it among various charities. About this we had a good deal of discussion, and I opposed the idea strongly. After some time, when pressed on the point, he said that, so far as he knew, he had no near relations other than yourself; and he told me for the first time who you were. I then said I thought it was the natural and proper thing to specify you as his heir, as in fact you would have been if there had been no will. He did not at first seem to like the idea; and at last, when I kept him to the point, he asked petulantly, What claim you had on him, or what you had done to deserve a fortune? I replied that your estrangement from him had been very much his own doing, and that there was no reason to suppose he would not have come to esteem you, if you had become better acquainted. You must not suppose," added Mr Paterson, drily, "that I was particularly prepossessed in your favour, for" (bowing slightly and smiling) "I had not then the pleasure of knowing you; but, so far as my experience goes, money left to charities is often as good as wasted, and I think, too, it is more proper in every way, and tends to prevent trouble and litigation, that people should leave their property among their family."

I ventured, interrupting, to ask why he did not suggest that he himself should be successor to the property. He had at least as much claim on my uncle's consideration as any one else, certainly more than I had. I could not express too strongly my feeling that my succession was wholly undeserved, and I blamed myself now, when it was

too late, for not having, as the younger of the two, made advances to him. But as the case stood, surely an old friend had better claims than an unknown relative?

"That is a fair question," said Mr Paterson; "but I should not have liked your uncle to think that any feeling about his inheritance might have been at the bottom of our intimacy. And," he added, with a shrewd smile, "as perhaps the assurance from an old lawyer that he has as much money as he wants may be received with suspicion, I may add that I don't think your uncle would have left me his property, even if I had proposed it. We were very good friends, but not quite so thick as that."

"Well, to resume. That day nothing was settled; and the following day, which was a Saturday, I went down again to Twickenham to stay over the Sunday with him. Your uncle was still very ill, although up and dressed every day; and it seemed doubtful if he would get over the attack. We did not speak about the will till the Sunday evening, when he broached the subject himself. He had been thinking a good deal about it, he said, and considered that on the whole it would be better to leave the money in his family. He felt doubts, however, about you, knowing nothing of your history since you went out to India. You might be a spendthrift or worse. Excuse my plain speaking, but I want you to understand exactly how matters stood. Well, I said, I suppose one can find out all about him at the Horse Guards. I will make inquiries there, if you wish, on the understanding that if you are answered satisfactorily, I have your authority to prepare the will in his favour. He agreed to this, and I took a note of instructions regarding some small bequests to be included in the draft. I came up to town

next morning before he was out of bed, and went straight to the Horse Guards. They referred me there to the adjutant-general of artillery, I think was the name of the official, into whose room I was shown. This gentleman appeared to fancy I had come about some claim against you, for he was very curt at first, and said it was no part of Horse Guards' work to collect officers' debts; but I explained how matters stood, and that a rich relation desired to make a testamentary disposition in your favour, provided he should get satisfactory assurances as to your character, and the officer eventually became very frank and communicative. He did not know you personally, he said, but he was able to give a very good account of you. The best proof that you stood well with the authorities was, he said, that you were the junior second captain (is that the right name?) in the regiment serving with the Horse Artillery. I asked if he could say whether you were married; and a clerk who was referred to produced a big register which replied in the negative. I thought your uncle would be pleased to know this, belonging, as we both did, to the fraternity of bachelors; but you see the register only dealt with things *in esse*, not with futurity.

"Well, the long and short of the story is, that I took the first opportunity of going down to Twickenham with the draft; your uncle was satisfied, and the will was prepared and duly executed a few days later. Your uncle got over this attack, and might have been alive now, but for imprudence in going out punt-fishing one cold day in the beginning of March. This brought on another attack of bronchitis, which carried him off almost in a few hours. I was down in Scotland at the time, and did not receive his housekeeper's letter till he

was dead. I must talk to you more about your uncle at another time; we shall have plenty of opportunities for doing that, but you will want to know first about the will. Well, I felt a little anxious lest he should have altered it, for he was so much in the habit of constantly changing his investments from one thing to another, that there was a likelihood he might begin to play with his will in the same way; but perhaps he would scarcely have done this without consulting me, and in fact the will was found intact. There is a charge of the interest on five thousand pounds to a cousin in Scotland, a maiden lady, whom he used to visit occasionally when he went down there; and there is a bequest of a thousand pounds to me as executor, which will repay me for my trouble in the matter; and there are suitable legacies to his three servants, and the rest of the property is left absolutely to you, with, so far as I can see, no charge upon it, equitable or otherwise."

Mr Paterson then went into details. The property was being scheduled, and, so far as could be told yet, the present income considerably exceeded the sum previously advised, three thousand five hundred a-year; but a good many of the investments were of a somewhat speculative kind, which would require constant watching; and they were so numerous and scattered that it would take up my whole time to look after them, as it did my uncle's, if I went into the business myself, or else involve a heavy charge for agency, and very possibly result in losses. The house property at Twickenham was a good investment, the leases having long terms to run; at any rate there was no need to be in a hurry about converting it: but Mr Paterson recommended a gradual consolidation of

the scattered share investments into a few good securities, railway debentures, guaranteed India railway stock, and so forth. This would reduce the income somewhat, but would render the property secure and manageable. He had taken upon himself to let the house at Twickenham furnished for the summer, as he thought I should prefer living in London at first, or travelling. Then about the succession and residuary duties. To pay these and the probate out of the estate would cause a sensible permanent reduction of income, and although this was the way in which legatees usually settled the matter, he would nevertheless venture to suggest that the amount of the duty should be repaid to the estate by a loan, which could be easily raised at a low rate on the security available, to be paid off out of income in, say, four or five years. This would be the prudent course. "You will find it quite as easy," said Mr Paterson, "to live on two thousand five hundred or three thousand a-year as on the larger income; and the increase, accruing gradually as the charge is paid off, will come in very suitably should your family expenses increase by-and-by." As to the funds for present purposes, it would take some time to schedule the estate and make it over to me, but in the mean time I could of course draw what was necessary. Perhaps the best plan would be to open an account with Sturrock's, with whom the firm banked. I had already drawn a thousand pounds, but there was still a balance of dividends at credit of the current account of the estate, and of course there would be no difficulty about expenditure *ad interim*. "Only," said the old gentleman, "I hope you will allow me to take the liberty of offering a caution on this head. Of course I do not know but what my advice may be quite superfluous and out of

place, but still I have always been given to understand that army officers are disposed to be rather free with their money; anyhow, young married people are certainly given that way sometimes, so I would just venture to say that people will always find it much easier to expand in their way of living than to pull in, and that it is just as easy within certain bounds to live on any given sum as on double the amount. So far as my experience goes, the people on good incomes find just as much difficulty to keep within their means as those who are only moderately well off. In fact, if it wasn't the well-to-do folks who get into trouble about money matters as well as the poor, we lawyers should often have a slack time of it. Everything depends on the scale on which you make a beginning."

In conversation of this kind an hour and a half passed very quickly, during which, notwithstanding its absorbing interest, I could not but be sensible of the drollery of the situation, in that a poor beggar like me, whose connection with the banking interest had hitherto been limited to the anxious provision of the monthly quotas on my humble loan, should now be gravely discussing the comparative advantages of investing in the London and Whitehall or the Metropolitan and Provincial Bank, and other financial problems of the like sort. But although the office was a large one and full of clerks, no one came in to interrupt us, and the old gentleman did not seem to be in any hurry. I was introduced to Mr Roberts, the managing clerk—the two partners were both absent—and returned to lunch at the hotel with a very vivid sensation of regret, amid all the excitement created by this verification of the first news of my good fortune, that my uncle's strange cynicism made it impossible

to feel that affection for his memory I would fain have accorded to it, and that his bequest had not come to me from personal intimacy and regard instead of a cold sense of family duty. I confess also, and not without shame, to an uncomfortable sensation while reflecting that, until the succession duties were paid, and his control as executor over the estate concluded, it was in Mr Paterson's power to walk off to America with the whole of my uncle's property.

That afternoon Eva and I went shopping, for, having come from India, she had of course nothing to wear; and a Bond Street milliner had accordingly the satisfaction of seeing one or two of her bonnets and other matters of ornamental apparel set off in a manner which must have made the young lady who acted as lay-figure to the establishment feel henceforward her own complete incompetence for the post. We then drove to the Park, and alighting, took seats in the drive and watched the procession of carriages. Eva had never been in London before, save for an hour or so while passing through; and except that she declared herself ashamed of her bonnet, which, having been made in India, partook of last year's fashion—an anxiety quite needless, for anything would have looked becoming on her—she greatly enjoyed the scene, which is certainly to a newcomer the most striking one in town. Simple pleasures often please most. But the result of the shopping and walking combined was that she returned to the hotel so fatigued and faint as to be unable to sit up to dinner, and the opera was out of the question. Clearly the effects of that horrid journey had not been overcome yet, and much care and rest were needed to restore my little wife to her health. I ought of course to have called in

medical aid, and an experienced physician would certainly have enjoined abstinence from London amusements and the racket of hotel life; but Eva declared she was only tired, and I was too thoughtless or self-occupied to press the point. Young people seldom understand what is prudent in these matters. They trifle with health till that treasure is lost.

Next morning she was better, and while we were discussing a late breakfast Mr Paterson called on his way to the city to make her acquaintance. His references the day before to my married state had been of the briefest, and I could guess that he was open to receive any impression regarding an Indian wife, and was prepared for anything monstrous he might meet, and it was amusing to see his change of expression immediately on coming into the room. In five minutes the old gentleman was thoroughly fascinated, as who would not have been by so sweet a face and such unaffected and natural refinement? He went away having engaged us to dine at his house the following day; and hearing Eva say that she was fond of music, the dinner was fixed for six o'clock, in order that we might all go to Covent Garden afterwards. But one little complication occurred. Mr Paterson was beginning to speak to Eva about my accession of fortune, which she, I think, took at first to be meant as a compliment to her, whereon I interrupted him by saying, "Mr Paterson, Eva, is managing some property which has been left to me lately, about which I will speak to you by-and-by;" and he took the hint and stopped talking on this topic; but I could discern an expression of amused surprise on his face, as much as to say, how comes all this affection with so little confidence? But indeed there had been little opportunity during the jour-

ney to talk about business, Eva having been too weak and ill to take an interest in such things; and so the idea had taken root to say nothing about it then, but to keep the announcement for a little surprise on our arrival.

Accordingly, after Mr Paterson was gone, I told Eva that the property he had referred to had just come to me from an uncle, and was very considerable, and in fact had quite made a change in my position and plans in life. This indeed, I added, was the pleasant business which has brought us home. Eva was naturally delighted at this news; she had always fancied, she said, that the business was something to do with the Horse Guards, which officers were always talking about. "But have you really got as much money as you want? Mamma told me that all artillery officers were dreadfully poor, and that I should have to be very careful and saving, and think about every farthing I spent on dress and everything else, and I felt horribly anxious yesterday after the shopping, when I saw what a lot of money you paid." But should I leave the army? she hoped not. She admired her husband, she was pleased to say, in his uniform, and it was so nice having pretty chargers to ride.

I explained that there would be time enough to think about leaving the army, or staying in it, a couple of years hence, when my leave would come to an end; and that meantime we could look about us, and frame a scheme of life.

"Oh, how charming!" said Eva, with two of the prettiest hands in the world resting crossed on my shoulder; "then it won't be wicked extravagance to go to the opera, and to get some proper dresses, and to buy Syb and my aunts and Mary Drew something nice to take down to Leatherby?"

"There is nothing, my darling" (this "after compliments," as they say in the preamble of an Eastern letter), "between your wishes and your conscience. I think our purse will stand as many opera tickets as you are likely to want, and you can't dress too nicely to please your old husband; and as for the presents for your sister and aunts, let us go out and choose them this very morning."

"But where was the property?" Eva asked; "and was there a nice house on it?" I explained that it was not landed property, but shares and suchlike investments, some of them more or less risky, and which ought to be converted as soon as possible into more substantial securities; and, in fact, that this conversion was the principal business on hand. "Oh! I never shall be able to understand all about that," said Eva; "but I thought a property always meant a house and grounds. Mr Drew and Mr Bamfylde, and all the gentlemen of property about Leatherby, all have houses and grounds. But I suppose you will buy a house and grounds with a pretty garden, by-and-by, won't you? It will be so nice to have a pretty flower-garden all of our own."

A dissertation was thereupon commenced, with all the authority due to my recently-acquired knowledge on the subject, regarding the loss arising in the transfer of investments from superior stocks to land, by reason of the smaller interest obtainable from the latter species of security, but the pretty listener did not appear to follow me, and tried in vain to seem interested in the matter, so I put off initiating her further into the mysteries of my affairs till a more convenient season. It would clearly be premature to bother her little head with such matters at present.

"No letter from your sister or aunts this morning?" I asked next

day at breakfast. "What can have happened that they don't write?"

Eva blushed, looking prettier than ever. "Oh, my dearest Charlie! what will you say? I'm afraid it's all my fault for never having written."

"Not written! You don't mean to say that you've not let them know of our arrival? I thought you wrote the first morning we were here, while I went into the city?"

"Oh yes, I fully intended to; but then, you know, I was unpacking, and then I got so tired and had to lie down, and then you came back, and then we went out together, you know, and then I was so unwell in the evening, and all yesterday there really was not a moment. Dear little Syb, I hope she won't think me unkind. I am sure I never meant to be."

"Well, I should fear both she and your aunts may feel a little hurt, when they learn that we have been three days in England, and have never sent them even a line to tell them of it. However, the best thing to do now is to telegraph and ask Sybil to come up and join us at once."

Eva was sure her aunt would never allow her to come. Aunt Emily never let any of the girls go away from home without accompanying them. Mamma's instructions had been very strict on this point.

"Very good, then, let us ask one of your aunts to come up too. We should be delighted to see her, and why should she not enjoy a visit to town as well as her niece?"

It would indeed be charming if Aunt Emily could come up, Eva said, but she did not think either of them would go away from home just now. Aunt Honoria never went anywhere, and Aunt Emily could not leave Mary Drew. She was equally certain that they would never answer a telegram, which would only have the

effect of flurrying them. However, the telegram was duly despatched, and Eva went to her room to write her letter, resisting all my proposals that she should use the more convenient writing-table provided in our sitting-room.

That evening we dined with Mr Paterson at his house in Sackville Street, a party of six to fill the opera-box, as he said, apologising for the small number of guests to meet us; Mr and Mrs Herries, and a young lady, a pupil of the Royal Academy of Music, who was a sort of ward of his, and reputed to be a very fine singer; but we had not an opportunity of hearing her that evening. Herries appeared a good deal younger than his partner, and a very different sort of man, with dark hair and beard, aquiline nose, and quick active eyes mounted with spectacles. Mrs Herries was a tall, handsome woman, with a refined and melancholy face. Although the dinner was for half-a-dozen persons, it would have served for twenty. There was a needless profusion of courses, wines, and waiters; and although we sat down soon after six, it was barely over in time for the opera. The young ladies both looked tired; Mr Herries became silent; while I felt thoroughly angry with myself when a droll thought came into my head that possibly all this demonstration was a mere blind, that Mrs Herries was a graceful accomplice of the sort described in a sensation novel, and that the old lawyer had made his plans to start for Liverpool after the opera. Mr Paterson, however, happily unconscious of the dark suspicions entertained about him, and who was evidently fascinated by Eva's pretty face and winning manners, did not appear to find the time at all too long, but enjoyed his party immensely, doing the honours of the table with great *empressment*, while

Mrs Herries was apparently not a person with too much employment, or likely to be soon bored. However, we got to the opera at last. Mr Paterson had secured a box on the grand tier; and although the piece happened to be one of Verdi's feeblest, Eva's gratification at this her first visit was sufficiently evident, albeit she was not given to be demonstrative in public, and I found sufficient pleasure in admiring her, and observing the admiration she created. The young lady from the Royal Academy—who, by the way, was very well looking and set off the box excellently—took a keen professional interest in the performance, informing me in confidence

that Cipriani had no voice left to speak of, and shaking her head ominously at a certain doubtful shake of the *prima donna*. Mr Paterson, who had done justice to his good dinner, after the first half-hour went fast asleep; while Mr Herries, discovering an acquaintance in the stalls, went down and spent the evening in an animated conversation with him apparently on business. We returned to the hotel in great spirits, but Eva was very tired and unfit for exertion next day. These amusements must evidently be indulged in with caution, if the recovery of her strength was not to be retarded.

CHAPTER X.—EXTENDS MY FAMILY ACQUAINTANCE.

As Eva had foretold, her aunt did not prove equal to the emergency of answering by telegram; but she, as well as Sybil, wrote in reply to Eva's letter by return of post; and, as she also foretold, Sybil was not to be allowed to join us. Her aunt did not feel at liberty to trust her away from home without themselves, nor could they either of them accept our invitation; Aunt Emily was unwell, and Aunt Honoria could not leave home just at present (Aunt Honoria never did leave home, Eva said), but would not we go down at once and stay as long as we could spare time for? And as it appeared the estate would not be scheduled for some time, and there was really no urgent business to keep us in town, we started off a day or two afterwards, not, however, before we had promised to occupy Mr Paterson's house on our return, instead of stopping at the Belgravia, and also to pay Mrs Herries a visit at Bushey.

"This is a small world we live in," said the old gentleman, as he

bid us good-bye. "Only think that Mrs West should have been brought up at Leatherby, a place I know so well. The fact is that one of the members, Mr Sheepshanks, is a very old friend. A most truly excellent man he is, indeed, and owns half the town. I wish you could know him. I would send an introduction and ask him to call and see you, but that I know it would be of no use. He never visits anywhere."

I was not impressed with any eager longing to make the acquaintance of the excellent Mr Sheepshanks, and intimated that we could bear the deprivation with resignation; but we promised to take the opportunity to go over his factory, which Mr Paterson said was one of the largest and most interesting in the kingdom. And we started off one fine morning by the Gloucester express.

If London was delightful in the latter days of a fresh June, what shall be said of the charms of the country, which in our brief hotel

life we had almost forgotten to think about! Except in the valley of the Thames by Maidenhead, the country is at first uninteresting; nevertheless, the greenness of the grass, the splendid trees, the soft air, the mere sensation of living in such a country after so long an exile from it, was an ecstasy in itself; this ride brought back the sensation of delight given by our first journey through Kent. But it is useless to expatiate on these sensations; the long absence must be undergone from these sweet English scenes before the full delight of visiting them can be felt.

Leatherby appeared at first sight to be one of those towns so common in England which exist in defiance of all principles of political economy, serving no apparent purpose but to send a member or two to Parliament, and to furnish a livelihood to about ten times the number of small tradesmen really needed for supplying the wants of the population, and where they live like fish in a pond by preying on each other, the butcher selling dear meat to the baker, and the baker dear bread to the butcher, and the plumber taking out his share of a livelihood by small jobs in bad workmanship all round; while a few farmers and small annuitants contribute the surplus expenditure, which forms, after all, the ultimate means of support to the whole community. This was the apparent aspect of the sleepy little town, which lies, sheltered and stuffy, nestled among hills on the banks of the Yew, at this part of its course merely a shallow trout-stream. But this first impression was dispelled at sight of the large mill referred to by Mr Pater-son, which rose up above the bank of the river, quite destroying by its size the due perspective of the hills, yet forming, with its ivy-covered

walls and shelter of tall poplars a not unpleasing feature in the landscape. The town, it was evident, lived upon the mill, or, as it was always called, the factory; while the spare spendings of the neighbouring farmers aforesaid, and the occasional country gentlemen who were too lazy or good-natured to do all their shopping in Yewcester or London, came in as a sort of bonus or extra dividend to the grocers and drapers of the place. The town generally appeared to belong to Mr Sheepshanks; the two trucks which stood in the station siding had a decayed label on each with his address, which seemed to do permanent duty on behalf of the mill: the Fore Street was adorned by a town hall, with an inscription notifying that it had been erected by John Sheepshanks, Esquire, M.P. for the borough; a tablet in the south aisle of the parish church proclaimed that it had been restored at the sole expense of the same generous representative, who, by the way, was a Dissenter himself, and always went to the Independent chapel; while a new church in the lower part of the town had been built entirely at his cost. The greater portion of the lower town, moreover, consisted of neat terraces constructed by him for his operatives in the days of the ten-pound householder. The other member was a certain Lord Wraymouth, at present holding a subordinate post in the Government—an elderly gentleman, whose father, the Earl of Stowe, had declined to make way for him at a reasonable age—who himself did not own an acre of land in the borough, where he never appeared except at election times, and whose principal connection with the place appeared to consist in an annual subscription of five-and-twenty pounds to the town races.

But all this information I acquired

by degrees, and not during our journey to Leatherby. Sybil and Mary Drew met us at the station, and we walked up the little town to the house, sending our boxes by the Three Butts omnibus. Sybil was very like Eva, not quite so tall, but almost as pretty, and with the same profusion of light-brown wavy hair; very shy at first, and always more or less so when in my company, but able to talk sometimes, as I could judge by the peals of gentle laughter to be heard on sundry occasions afterwards when the three girls were alone together. Of course there was an immense deal of kissing on the platform between them, the station-master and local porter notwithstanding; nor were the civil greetings to "Miss Eva" of those officials and the stout fellow who combined the functions of driver and conductor of the omnibus unpleasant to witness; nor those of one or two old acquaintances whom we met on our progress up Church Street—old Miss Barbour, to wit, who acknowledged to sixty, but stood recorded in the parish register as a ratepayer for fifty-five years—and young Harry Perkins, Mr Fergusson's apprentice, who blushed up to the eyes as he found all escape cut off, and so came and shook hands all round.

The Miss Bartons' house was in the best and most retired street, which terminated in the churchyard, and hence derived its name. A cheerful gutter with a stream of clear water ran down beside each pavement in front, and at the back was a steep garden well furnished with fruit and terminated by the willow-bordered stream. On the other bank of this was a meadow, beyond which the view was stopped by the poplars and higher walls of the mill, above which again rose the tops of the steep hills enclosing the valley. The house was an old-fashioned one of two storeys, which looked among

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its loftier neighbours right and left as if the builders had forgotten to pull it down when renewing the rest of the street. Right of the passage was the dining-parlour, left of it the drawing-room: the kitchen and offices projected at the back on a lower level, and looking on the garden also was the girls' schoolroom. The upper floor was more irregular, the constructor having apparently designed it on the principle that every room should be approached by a flight of steps up or down. The house had been furnished in the time of Mr Barton's childhood, and the chairs and tables partook of the spindle-like and perpendicular character affected by upholsterers fifty years ago; while time had so far left its mark on them that it was difficult to say what had been the original colour of the coverings which matched the curtains of an enormous four-post bedstead, filling up the best part of the spare room now appropriated to Eva, and last permanently occupied by the late Mrs Barton, who died about ten years after her son went to India. The drawing-room ornaments were in keeping. Conspicuous over the fireplace was the portrait of a certain Captain Bowyard, who, after having served for thirty years in the late East India Company's Marine, eventually obtained the distinction of a seat in the Court of Directors. This worthy, who had a high forehead, a white wig, one epaulette, and a considerable stomach, and appeared a sort of unintellectual likeness of the late Marquess Cornwallis as represented in the Council Chamber at Calcutta, was Mr Barton's great uncle, and it was to him that the latter owed his appointment to an Indian writership. Opposite this portrait was a view of the late Captain Bowyard's house in Essex, bequeathed by him to Mrs Barton, senior, with remainder to her daughter

ters, and the rent of which, indeed, formed the major part of their proper income; a design in the Chinese school of art of a very ugly house of very red bricks and a great many very small bow-windows, approached by a circular gravel sweep surrounding a large grass plot with a rose-bush in the centre, the flowers of which were in course of being intently regarded by a gentleman in white stockings and a three-cornered hat escorting a lady with a large head of hair and a very short waist. These figures, supposed to represent the late Captain and Mrs Bowyard in the prime of their youth and beauty, were accompanied by a small terrier standing out in one sense very black against the green grass, and in another on its hind legs, his head turned round towards his master in opposition to the situation properly indicated for it by the direction of his tail, as if inviting him to a closer inspection of the rose-bush in question—which study from animal life, as Miss Barton once took occasion to observe, gave the whole scene a very natural appearance. These works of art were set off by others of a more modern character, indicating the course of the family history and the later inmates of the household. A half-figure portrait in oils of Eva's papa before he went to India: a smooth face with a vacuous smile, supported by a profusion of light hair carefully parted, brushed, and curled; a large satin scarf folded twice round the neck, showing very little shirt-collar, and fastened by a double pin and chain; a large pillar of the cyclopean order of architecture behind, bearing a red curtain not more than sixty feet high, a part of which had been drawn back to display what appeared to be an elevation of the Brighton pavilion together with a palm-tree, emblems of his future career;—the foreground consisting mainly of a

very white hand turned up to show a very gold ring on the little finger. Then there was an oil-painting of Eva's four eldest sisters, done by a local artist, representing them all standing in a line gazing into the front, in red frocks, white frilled trousers, and sandals, with beautifully curled hair, the frills and buttons on the frocks especially being speaking likenesses. There were also photographic likenesses of all the sisters taken at different times, and illustrating the advance in the photographic art; for whereas that of Mary the eldest sister was on metal, and of a sort that the portrait could only be dimly made out by standing with your nose against the wall about four feet on one side of the frame, in which position it was pronounced to be wonderfully distinct,—that of Eva, taken just before she sailed for India, was a coloured photograph done in Gloucester, and a very pretty picture of her—albeit a little stiff.

Various ornaments set off the room, proclaiming the connection of the family with India: fans of peacock-feathers, a Bombay inlaid work-box, a ditto chess-table, a ditto card-box, a Japanese cabinet, various little plaster figures of native servants, ivory bullock-carts, and little silver idols supposed to have some connection with the Brahmins,—the whole collection representing the non-edible or non-wearable contents of consignments at various times since the Misses Barton had the children under their care. They helped to set off the otherwise faded appearance of the room, which, however, did not want for evidence of feminine refinement in keeping with the character of its inmates. Miss Barton (Aunt Emily, as the girls called her) was a tall lady who looked to be about fifty, with features showing the remains of great beauty, a thin figure with a slight stoop, a low sweet voice, and a gentle man-

ner, while a certain nervous habit of rubbing her hands together when seated indicated a trait of character which became more plain on better acquaintance. It could indeed be seen at once that she was nervous and easily made anxious; a languid movement spoke of deficient energy; while her frail aspect and certain lines about the face gave the impression of one suffering from pain and ill health; but no complaint on that score ever escaped Aunt Emily, and her life seemed to be devoted to her charges, and her thoughts mainly concerned about them.

Miss Honoria appeared to be at least fifteen years younger than her sister, and was still very handsome. Time had not yet silvered her dark hair; and her pale clear complexion, upright carriage, and firm quick step, bespoke a sound constitution. I could not make her out at first, or discover her share in the household; but it was impossible to be with the elder Miss Barton for more than a few minutes without discovering the unselfishness of her disposition, and her refined if somewhat effeminate nature. As soon as the early tea with the solid accompaniments provided on our account was despatched, the girls went up-stairs to unpack Eva's things; and Miss Honoria going out for a solitary walk in the garden, it fell to her sister's share to entertain me in the drawing-room. We thus soon became better acquainted, and I was able to enter into the warmth of her affection for her nieces, and to learn something of her way of looking at things. I could hardly understand, she said, the delight it was to her to see Eva again. One by one the girls went off, and then, although they heard of their marrying and settling down in homes of their own, they were such bad correspondents, dear girls, she got no particulars of their future

life, except, indeed, from Mrs Barton, who wrote very regularly; and then she felt as if they were lost to her for ever, dearly as she loved them all: and now to get Eva back in this unexpected way, she could not say what a happiness it was. What she and Honoria would do when Sybil went, they could hardly bear to think; and then before long Mary Drew would be grown up and leaving them—very desolate the house would seem without the young people. At the same time, I could readily understand there must have been great anxieties attached to the charge of these young girls, so pretty, too, as they all turned out; but they had been thoroughly good, and had never given a moment's trouble.

"Still, you can understand," said the gentle lady, to whom, as I judged, this burst of talking must have been an unusual feat, "our position must have been a very anxious one. Indeed, from the day dear Joseph left us, his silence caused us great anxiety, although we got accustomed to it in time as the years went on, and he never wrote; and we know that civil servants holding these high appointments must have a great deal to occupy their time; and we used occasionally to hear about him from others who had friends in India, and that he was doing well: still, during my dear mother's last illness, it would have been a great comfort if he could have only written once or twice; and she used to inquire so anxiously if there were any letters whenever we heard that any ships had come home; but no doubt he was very busy. I believe he was a magistrate then, which no doubt in India must be a very arduous post; and when he heard of my dear mother's death he at once sent a handsome remittance. And then when he married, and his dear wife began to write to us, we felt as if our brother was restored to us;

and when the children had to be sent home, and Maria (this was her sister-in-law) proposed they should be sent to us, we could not but feel what a providential thing his marriage had been." Miss Barton went on to say that she had doubts at first whether she should be justified in accepting such a responsibility, living so much out of the world as she and her sister did, and Honoria being then very young and never able to undertake much work; but Mr Fergusson (their medical man) and Miss Barbour both counselled her to do so, and certainly she had every reason to be thankful at the result. It had given them a house when they should have found it difficult to live respectably and as became officers' children, for at one time they had the lease of their house (the brick structure in Essex already referred to) on their hands, and they could never feel sufficiently grateful for having had such dear sweet girls to bring up.

I could heartily enter into and sympathise with Miss Barton's feelings, and was able conscientiously to reply in a few suitable words about the credit attaching to herself for the admirable result of all her care; but when she apologised for her brother's neglect of his mother and sisters, on the score of his pressing official engagements, I could not help recalling to mind my father-in-law, as he used to appear after a rubber of racquets, smoking a number one manilla in the gallery, with his flannel-shirt rolled up to his shoulders, while waiting for his turn to cut in again, as probably he had been accustomed to pass a considerable part of each day for the last thirty years.

Our conversation was interrupted by the return of Eva and the girls, laden with the little gifts we had brought down with us. Even during our hurried stay at Bombay it

had been found possible to lay in a small stock of the local curiosities esteemed by people in this country, and these we had supplemented by some more useful things in our London shopping, not forgetting the needs of Hannah the housemaid, and her sister Maria the cook; and surely there are few of the more obvious pleasures of life greater than is afforded by the giving a present where relationship or intimacy sanctions it, and no false obligation is involved. Then all Eva's wedding-presents had to be brought out and inspected: such a wonderful display had never been seen before by any of the admiring group, not even in the best Yewcester shops, they declared; and happily there was no one of the party to whom the display need cause a tinge of jealousy, for Sybil no doubt looked for her turn to come in due course, and Mary Drew would be an heiress. Then when the things had been sufficiently looked at and admired by all, including Hannah and Maria, and put away again, Aunt Emily's anxiety on the score of robbers being mitigated by the reflection that a gentleman would be sleeping in the house and in the same room with the treasures, we all strolled into the garden and watched the sunset, and the trout balancing themselves in the river, and an occasional water-rat taking his evening swim. I think Miss Barton's good opinion of me, which I could see stood high from the first, was a little shaken when I asked if she objected to the smell of tobacco in the open air; and I confess I should have said nothing about it, but suffered in secret, if Eva had not betrayed me by declaring that she knew I was dying for a cigar, and always smoked one in the evening—adding that her papa smoked in every room of the house, and that she herself enjoyed the smell of tobacco above everything. Thereon

I accepted her aunt's assurance that it would not be disagreeable, and my long face was such a mine of respectability, that it would easily outweigh such small confessions of vicious ways.

Then when it grew dark we returned to the drawing-room, and a tray of wine and biscuits was brought in, and Mary Drew sang a song, and then Sybil; and then, at her aunt's request, Eva, who had been sitting on a low stool by her side, fondling her hands, sang one of her old duets with Sybil—something about wandering over land and sea, the charms of my sweet Savoy to see, *Fa la la la, fa la lee!* Miss Barton took occasion, while I remarked on the natural beauty of both voices, to say that she had bestowed great attention on the musical education of all her nieces; for, although no musician herself, she thought music must be such a very nice thing in a hot country. She would have liked them to have a master from Yewcester, but her sister-in-law had always laid such stress on economy, and about the difficulty she and Joseph had in paying their way, that the outlay did not appear justifiable; and no doubt the expenses of so large a family must have been very heavy, and explained the irregularity that had sometimes occurred in sending home money for the children. And Leatherby was very fortunate in having so accomplished a musician in the organist of the parish church,

who taught music in all its branches, including harmony and thorough-bass, and had quite a large practice in the town. And again, as Miss Barton went on to describe the mode of education pursued, and the various little points wherein she had felt bound to practise economy, by way of saving her brother's pocket, I could not help calling to mind the light wines and general good cheer always on stock at Rhododendron Lodge, and the absence of anything like self-denial in the way of life of the good-natured man whose only economy had been practised in this vicarious fashion.

The songs over, Miss Barton, not without evident misgivings whether such a proceeding would be acceptable to a military man, especially to one belonging to the mounted branch of the service, rang for the maids to come in to prayers, which she read in a gentle if somewhat feeble voice. Thus ended our first day at Leatherby: and I was able to admit unreservedly, when put to the question by Eva at a later hour, that Aunt Emily was a sweet dear; also, that Aunt Honoria was very handsome and very kind. The character of the latter lady I had not been quite able to make out, she took so little part in all that went on, while my efforts to open up a little independent conversation with her during the music, had broken down from want of support.

CHAPTER XI.—GLIMPSES OF A QUIET LIFE.

The next day we had a levee of callers, including all the gentlefolk of the town, who appeared to consist for the most part of maiden ladies, and widows with grown-up daughters, an occasional gentleman being thrown in scantily here and there. Miss Barbour, the two Miss

Provests, the three Miss Smiths, Mrs and the Miss Frowards, and Mrs Crane, the only one of the party in possession of a husband, and he was in India. There were also Mr and Mrs William Bowles, who lived in a house surrounded by a garden in the centre of the town, and were re-

garded almost county people by reason of their keeping a large yellow barouche and a couple of hunters, as indeed were his brother Mr Rupert Bowles and family, who lived in a pretty cottage just outside Squire Bamfylde's grounds. The conversation during these visits was not of the most lively character, being chiefly limited, after greetings, to inquiries whether the heat that afternoon was not quite Indian. I would fain have followed Miss Honoria's example, and taken refuge in the shady grass plot by the river at the bottom of the garden, but was assured that my absence on this occasion would be regarded as an irreparable breach of Leatherby etiquette, so sat out the ordeal manfully. As it was, there seemed to be disappointment in some quarters that wedding-cake and wine were not served round; and by unanimous desire the wedding-presents had to be produced, the affair being generally regarded as a regular visit after the honeymoon, an occurrence too rare not to be made the most of; but it was a real pleasure to observe the kindly interest all callers took, not only in Eva herself, but also in her sisters, albeit they had evidently but the vaguest notion as to what had become of them, India being a country of mysterious import, and Mr Barton an official connected in some indeterminate way with the Hindoos. Mrs Crane, of course, took higher ground; and the Miss Frowards proved more than equal to the occasion, a certain cousin of theirs who lived in the north of England having married an officer belonging to the Hyderabad Contingent, which made them, so to speak, quite authorities on Indian subjects; and it was a disappointment to them to find that I had never met the gentleman in question and his wife, and my shortcomings in this respect appeared to throw a degree of sus-

picion on my antecedents. But they were all unaffectedly glad to see Eva again, although apparently surprised that she was in no way changed, except being a little paler than before, and to find her dressed just like other people, only in much better taste.

Harry Perkins was of course among the callers, with a high shirt-collar, hair well laid down with pomatum, and a flushed face, bringing three fine bouquets, sent by his mother, who lived at the neighbouring town of Stampton. "An offering from the maternal ladies, who hopes to have the felicity of calling on you herself in a day or two," said the young gentleman; whereon all the girls laughed. "I suppose you are as busy as ever, Mr. Harry?" observed Miss Barton, after the needful greetings had been exchanged. "Oh yes, ma'am," he replied; "the claims of science and the healing art are as strong as ever; but the governor makes over his dispensing to your humble servant, you see, and so sometimes when he is away I dispense the medicines first, and then dispense with my own services afterwards." Thereon all the girls laughed again. "And are you as fond of poetry as you used to be, Mr. Harry?" asked Eva, after a while. "Well," said he, "I do find a little time now and then to cultivate the Muses; science and art, you see, ladies, sometimes go together." Which remark caused as much merriment as the foregoing ones. It was explained to me afterwards that the young gentleman was a frequent contributor to the poet's corner of both the Stampton and Leatherby papers. Notwithstanding his vein of humour, our friend's visit might have proved a little tedious, for having found himself in a chair, he seemed quite unequal to the task of finding his way out of the room again; but happily some more visitors were an-

nounced, and under cover of the ensuing bustle he made good his flight. "What a droll boy Harry Perkins is!" said Sybil. "He is very clever," said Eva; "I am sure his verses used to be beautiful." "And so well brought up as he has been, too," added her aunt. His mother, it appeared, was the widow of a clergyman, and Harry her only child.

The pleasantest visit of the day was from Mrs Fergusson, the doctor's wife, who came with her two handsome daughters after all the other visitors had gone, and stayed a long time. These young ladies were Eva's particular friends, and prodigies of learning, as she had often told me, who, when staying with their uncle in London, always attended the School of Art at South Kensington, and Professor Warkopf's lectures at the Royal Institution, and spent hours every day studying botany and geology, and all sorts of horrid things; although, she added, it was no wonder, their mamma and papa were both so clever and scientific. But the admiration was mutual; if Eva respected her friends' accomplishments, they loved her for her beauty, and grace, and sweet gentle manners: there was enough disparity, in short, for mutual attachment. Mr Fergusson himself looked in later in the evening, a well-preserved middle-aged man, with a handsome determined face, who had nothing about him of the country doctor except the active habits of the class. This gentleman was evidently a sort of family guardian, who, besides his duties of medical adviser to the household, seemed to fulfil as well the functions ordinarily performed by the family lawyer and the parish clergyman. It was he who gave Miss Barton the needful advice about the investment of her little property, and, as I afterwards learnt, had arranged for the overdrawing of her account with

the local bank one time when her brother's remittances were more than ordinarily in arrears. He, too, always took the steamer passage for her nieces when that periodic arrangement had to be made; and on more than one occasion, when Miss Barton's health prevented her from going, he had accompanied the young traveller to Southampton, and placed her in charge of the matron—usually some friend of Mrs Barton returning to India—who was to act as chaperone during the voyage. Miss Barton, indeed, would hardly venture on a day's excursion to Gloucester without consulting Mr Fergusson; while not the least of his services had been to teach all the girls riding. Mrs Barton, in conveying her husband's periodic exhortations to economy, had always added his injunctions that the girls should go out to India well educated in this respect; but as Leatherby did not boast a riding-school or master of equitation, it might have been difficult to carry out his wishes but for Mr Fergusson's good-nature. Eva's graceful horsemanship was due to the teaching received while accompanying Mr Fergusson—who rode more like a dragoon than a doctor—in his visits to country patients over Herefordshire lanes and downs; and Sybil was now going through a course in the same useful art, the moving power being a certain well-bred screw belonging to the Three Butts, and known there as the Fergusson mare, because that gentleman was accustomed to use it when his own horse wanted rest; an animal of encyclopedic accomplishments, which during the winter months was the accustomed vehicle for exhibiting the prowess of the rising Leatherby sportsmen,—young Provost from Guy's Hospital, when he came home for his Christmas holidays—young Froward the articulated attorney, and occasionally Harry

Perkins,—with Squire Bamfylde's hounds; and in the summer, when not wanted for jobs in harness, enjoyed the recreation of carrying one of the Miss Bartons two or three times a-week. Mary Drew, also, was now in course of acquiring the same accomplishment, her father sending in a shaggy pony from Thorpe on these occasions for her use.

Mr Fergusson, I thought, appeared a little anxious as he looked at Eva, and noticed how much paler and thinner she was than she used to be; but she explained how much she had gone through on the journey home, and that she was now rapidly getting strong again. We strolled together into the garden after a while, and he reverted to the subject, saying that he always felt somewhat anxious about all the sisters, for there were none of them really strong; but they seemed all to keep so well in India, he supposed the climate there must be suited to them. "What a happiness this must be to their aunt," said he, "to get one of her nieces back again! Each time that she has had to part with one the pang has seemed harder—it has been like giving up a child of her own; and but that resignation is the foundation of her character, I really think it would have been too much for her. What she will do when Miss Sybil goes out to India, and Mary Drew goes home for good, I hardly like to think; but perhaps it is as well in other respects that her charges should be coming to an end, and that there are no more younger sisters coming home, for her strength is not what it was; and Miss Honoria——"

He paused here, feeling probably that it did not become him to speak confidentially about any member of the family to one who might be said now to belong to it; while I, for my part, although desirous to know

more, forbore for several reasons from pressing him further. In truth, I had been puzzled from the first to understand Miss Honoria's part in the little household. Although apparently in robust health, and certainly in the enjoyment of an excellent appetite, she took no share in the care or management of the house, which appeared to be shared between her sister and Mary Drew, the latter presiding at the breakfast and tea table, and doing all the heavy carving at dinner. She went to church daily morning and evening, and when not so employed or at meals, her time seemed to be spent in walking up and down the path at the bottom of the garden. When in the house she occupied herself in plain needlework, and rarely spoke unless addressed, but she was more often in her own room than sitting with the others. Withal she seemed quite rational, as well as thoroughly amiable. Both the girls and her sister accepted the state of things as a matter of course; and to the latter she appeared as much an object of regard and care as if she had been the most useful member of the household.

Of course we had to see the local sights, or rather I accompanied Sybil and Mary Drew on a tour to see them, for Miss Barton was not equal to much walking, and seldom went further than to the almshouses at the end of the street, where she read twice a-week to some old women, and Eva stayed at home to keep her aunt company. Thus we went over the church ("I don't know much about the architecture of it," said Miss Barton, "but I believe it is very much admired as something quite Gothic"), a roomy, ill-kept structure, much damaged by restorations a hundred years before; the grammar-school, where the boys of the town appeared to receive an inferior education at a very low price,

and where the initials were pointed out to us carved on one of the forms, of one John Tolly, who, having gone up quite a poor boy to try his fortune in London, eventually became Lord Mayor thereof; also a similar autograph wood-engraving of another distinguished townsman who served as a lieutenant in the fleet at Trafalgar. Then we climbed up the hill above the Bamfylde woods, to look from the celebrated view over the town, and descending went some way along the river to see the celebrated view of the hills from below, which Deedes, R.A., a connection of the Provests, was reported to have said, when he paid them a visit a few years ago, reminded him of the Trossachs. And of course we went over the factory, as well as the schools connected therewith, and the mechanics' reading-room, "erected by John Sheepshanks, Esquire, proprietor of the mill, and M.P. for the borough." It was a very happy, quiet week this; and the rest, and the society of her aunt and the girls were evidently agreeing better with Eva than the restless noisy life of a big London hotel. A general holiday was of course proclaimed on such an occasion, which meant that the morning visits were suspended of little Mr Abel, the writing and arithmetic master. Sybil appeared to have got as far as compound addition, an odious thing, she said; but Mary Drew, who Eva had told me beforehand was awfully clever, was deep in the mysteries of decimals, and made light of fractions. Also were suspended the bi-weekly lessons of Miss Jones, the French governess—"Mademoiselle" as she was called—who, having been English governess for a season at a *pension* in Paris, was regarded throughout Leatherby as an infallible authority on French politics, and the only person qualified to see through the real designs of the Commune. The saturday

occasioned by our visit included also the discontinuance of the evening readings in history—six pages of Hume read aloud in alternate pages by the two girls, while Miss Barton sat listening and gently rubbing her hands, and Miss Honoria was engaged silently on some article of plain work—fearfully dry stuff, Eva had styled this same improving study, when describing to me beforehand the mode of life at Leatherby. The schoolroom was used, however, by the younger members of the party to sit in of a morning, while Miss Honoria was at church and Miss Emily engaged on household duties; and little peals of innocent laughter often issued from it as I wrote letters or read the papers in the drawing-room, the silence of the place otherwise unbroken, save when about eleven o'clock every day Mr Sheepshanks passed by on his way to the mill, sitting upright in his one-horse barouche, with a benevolent smile on his face and a snuff-box in his hand; or when the empty omnibus from the Three Butts would make its periodic circuit of the town in search of passengers for the trains, who never appeared. There was one black afternoon when the visits had to be returned, but we refused all invitations except one to tea with the Fergussons, and another to be mentioned presently. "I make no apology for our simple habits," said the mistress of the house, as we sat down to the well-covered table; "for Eva knows our ways so well that the pretension of a heavy dinner would not impose on you. We could never have brought up our family properly if we had not renounced all needless waste in eating and drinking from the first; and Mr Fergusson can never be sure of sitting out a meal, however simple." And indeed Mr Fergusson was absent on

this occasion, only coming in just as everybody else had finished, and even then a little girl was reported to have arrived in the surgery with the intelligence that her still smaller sister had "scalded of herself." However, Robert, the eldest son (house-surgeon of St Brice's, but just now at home on leave), was deputed to act while his father took supper in peace. "I always maintain," said Mr Fergusson, while drinking his third cup of tea, "in opposition to the popular notions of the day, professional and otherwise, that wine is not necessary for health. Except mamma there, not one of us takes wine, and very few of us even beer, and the plan has agreed with us all." And certainly when I looked round the table I could not help thinking that if Eva and Sybil were left out, and perhaps young Perkins the pupil, who had not been brought up in the house, we should average eleven stone at the least. "But then," continued Mr Fergusson, "we country doctors are not supposed to know anything about these things. We regard each specimen of humanity as a whole, and so are incapacitated from forming sound opinions. To do that, you must lay yourself out for some specialty. Spend your life in a consulting practice devoted to complaints of the fifth rib, or the great toe, and you are entitled to be deemed a philosopher. A very pretty theory if the fifth rib or the great toe were a distinct autonomy, with behaviour apart from the remainder of the body, but as things go actually, hardly consistent with fact."

This remark was made as we strolled through the doctor's garden, his special hobby, where a goodly show of fruit was garnished with a still more brilliant display of flowers, and the tasteful arrangement of creepers and evergreens made it truly a *rus in urbe*, for the house

was in the centre of the town, and the garden was surrounded on all sides by walls and houses.

There was now a general demand for music, and although the summer air was tempting outside, the party repaired indoors. The whole Fergusson family were musical, and sang duets, trios, and quartets in excellent style; but they were still greater at instrumental music, and made up quite an orchestra, Mrs and Miss Fergusson at the piano, Miss Kate at the harp, Robert first violin, the second ditto being taken by Reginald the Cambridge freshman (foundation exhibitor at Mary-Anne Hall from the Leatherby grammar-school, an honour carried off after severe competition with the three other prefects in the sixth form), while Mr Fergusson played the violoncello. "Everlasting classical music, and dry stuff of that sort," said Sybil, as we walked home afterwards; "Beethoven six nights in the week, and Mendelssohn the seventh."

"I hope we shall not bore you awfully, Captain West," said Miss Kate, as the party were engaged in tuning up their instruments preparatory to the first piece; "but music is the one thing as to which we always say your wife is not perfect."

"Of course I like classical music," rejoined Eva, thus attacked; "and I should like nothing better than to play it, if it wasn't so horribly difficult."

"As if you could not play that or anything else you liked, dear," replied the other, "if you only tried. I assure you, Captain West, we none of us are fit to do more than work the bellows, if Eva played the organ; and as for difficulty, these things are nothing to her fantasia and variations by Herr Skratzky; but I needn't tell *you* what a touch Eva has, all thrown away owing to that horrid Mr Peddell."

And then the music began. Young Perkins was the only member of the family who could not take a part, and he remained silent throughout the evening, for at the sound of his voice, on his attempting some sniggering whispers intended for Sybil's ear, young Robert Fergusson, who was just coming to that celebrated passage (movement in D) for the first violin, and who being a full surgeon naturally regarded a pupil as something to be snubbed on every occasion, looked round so angrily that the youngster was effectually silenced. Why he did not pursue the natural course of falling in love with his master's daughters I cannot say; but it had been his fate apparently to cherish a hopeless attachment to each of the Miss Bartons in turn, beginning with Mary when she was only six years older than himself, and so on down to Sybil, who was now in course unconsciously of kindling the warmest sentiments of his heart. And as the young fellow sat in a corner, his usually perky features assuming for the nonce a somewhat melancholy aspect, it was easy to fancy him, under the influence of the music, building castles in the air on a foundation of Beethoven: an ap-

pointment to the Bengal medical establishment, followed by an early meeting with Sybil's parents, who spurn the young unknown assistant surgeon with contumely; how his surpassing merits would soon be recognised and rewarded by a confidential post on the Governor-General's staff; and how, summoned to attend Sybil in a desperate Indian fever, he succeeds in recovering her after she had been given over by three of the most eminent local physicians; how, finally, when brought to see his worth and talent, in a transport of emotion she gives him her hand, the grateful parents assenting to and blessing the union. And in truth Sybil was pretty enough to turn any young fellow's head.

"I have often regretted," said Mr Fergusson later in the evening, as we partook of refreshments preparatory to departure, "that I did not succeed in persuading Miss Barton to employ Dr Phewgew of Yewcester to teach her nieces music, for old Peddell, our organist, although a worthy soul, is not much of a musician, as you will be able to discover on Sunday; but she did not feel at liberty to incur the expense, and so I did not press the point."

CHAPTER XII.—LOCAL POLITICS.

The other visit we paid was to Thorpe, Mr—or, as the people all about called him, Squire—Drew's place, that gentleman having ridden in and given us a pressing invitation to go out and see his grounds. Mr Drew was a widower, who, finding the care of a young girl rather a difficult and troublesome office, had obtained the consent of Miss Barton, a distant connection of his wife, to take charge of her, and Mary Drew had accordingly been an inmate of Aunt Emily's household for the last

six years, and it was understood would remain there for another four or five until she was grown up; her father, in the mean time—a shrewd, well-educated, but shy man—occupying himself mainly in hunting, shooting, the growing of turnips, and the miscellaneous business of a county magistrate. As he was reputed to be worth five thousand a-year and to spend about one, it was expected that his daughter would be a great heiress. Meanwhile a more unaffected good-temper-

ed girl it would be difficult to find—not very pretty, but with the good looks of health, and a bright intelligent face; while she could not have lived so long with Aunt Emily, as she always called her, without acquiring her habit of refined and gentle manners.

We drove out in the afternoon in an open fly hired from the Three Butts, the unfortunate Fergusson mare being ignobly yoked for the occasion to a less high bred but equally gummy companion. The party consisted of Mary Drew, Sybil, Eva, and myself; Aunt Emily excused herself from the exertion, and Aunt Honoria could not come, as the excursion would have interfered with afternoon service. The road lay up the narrow valley of the Yew, with hills clothed in splendid woods on either side. We passed one or two pretty country seats, Mr Sheepshanks's modest villa among them, lying low down on the Yew bank, before we came to Squire Drew's, situated at the head of a little valley which ran down at right angles to the main one, on the border-land between the woods and the moors above, cleverly placed so as to command the smallest possible view—a white-plastered, comfortable, ugly house, under the porch of which the Squire, stooping slightly, as was his wont, and with his spectacles on, stood waiting to receive us. The interior of the house corresponded with the appearance of the outside, and was probably just as the late Mrs Drew had left it. A drawing-room evidently disused, and the anteroom, gave evidence of a taste in art, and the things we saw had been collected by the Squire when travelling abroad twenty years before. But his art education had become stereotyped at this point, or the love of money had intervened to stop the process of collecting, for there was nothing

visible in the way of ornament or books of a later date; and the rooms which appeared to be tenanted bespoke the ordinary country gentleman with a taste for field-sports.

However, we were not long in the house, for, on our refusing the refreshments offered, the Squire led us out to see the grounds. The ornamentation of the grounds had still to be carried out, the drive up to the house being little different from a common field—and there was no flower-garden to speak of, or anything which offered the opportunity for complimenting the proprietor; while it was curious to observe Mary Drew walking like a stranger about her father's grounds, or looking at the rooms of a house in which she could not remember ever having slept. Almost immediately behind the house we came on the coverts, plentifully tenanted by pheasants with their young broods, and their feeding-troughs guarded by chained dogs; and then we passed through some fields farmed by the Squire himself. The most striking thing at first about the estate was the dilapidated condition of the labourers' thatched cottages; and I took occasion to observe that they looked to be more picturesque than comfortable. They cost a lot of money to keep up, however, did those cottages, said Mr Drew. I thereon inquired how wages stood in these parts, and was told that they were fairly satisfactory—generally about nine or ten shillings a-week, and seldom so high as eleven shillings. "You see, if we take a man on in the spring we promise him a bonus of ten or fifteen shillings after the harvest, and that keeps the hands with you right through the season. Otherwise they would be off all over the country in mowing and reaping times. But rates are high, very high; in the

winter, especially, if it comes a frost, the Stampton Union is crowded."

The conversation which then followed, about the poor-rates and the general difficulty farmers and landlords found in paying their way, was, however, interrupted as we reached the edge of the cultivated table-land and entered on the wooded side of the hill overlooking the main valley and river. Here the narrow path and the beauty of the scene were alike sufficient to extinguish any desire for a discussion on the dismal science; and when we reached a small plateau whereon stood a summer-house, the view was beautiful enough to attract the attention of the most indifferent. The woods extended straight down to the river about two hundred feet below us, the red bank and white shingle bed of which set off the bright green of the strips of meadow-land, dotted with noble elms, which bordered the little stream on one side or the other, as it meandered to and fro; while opposite us, and rising to the same height, were hills also wooded, and in the full splendour of summer foliage. A few cows feeding in the meadows, a fly-fisher pursuing his sport, a cart slowly crossing the bridge over the stream below, the smoke from a cottage, were, save the birds singing in the trees, the only objects in movement; the scene was redolent of the quiet sweetness of sylvan beauty only to be found in England; while the surroundings were suggestive of that happy state of life where pheasants are abundant and wages stand at nine shillings a-week.

But such reflections hardly found time for expression in view of the cheerful bustle of the immediate foreground. A gamekeeper had already lighted a wood-fire beside the summer-house, and was engaged in spreading on the table the contents of a hamper which a lad had

brought down from the house. Trout-salad, chicken and tongue, syl-labub, late strawberries and cream, with cakes and tartines, formed our repast. Tea and coffee were prepared by Mary Drew, while various wines and some wonderful Yewcester-shire cider were provided for those who preferred stronger drink. Some of this last-named fluid, I was informed, had been drunk at the Stampton Conservative banquet two years before, and was pronounced by the local paper to be equal to superior champagne; and, apart from comparisons, it was certainly a most excellent beverage, although possibly suggestive of gout. Our little feast, in such scenery, on a lovely summer evening, could not fail to go off well; and the pleasure of the picnic was much enhanced by the timely arrival of Mr Ferguson and his second daughter. He had taken advantage of a professional visit in the neighbourhood to drive her out; and, putting up his horse and gig at the little farm below, he and the young lady climbed up the wood; and the party being simultaneously completed by the addition of a neighbouring squire who joined us at this rendezvous, we sat down on the benches of the summer-house to our meal.

This concluded, the young ladies set about collecting wild-flowers; while Mr Drew, producing some very tolerable cigars—the wreck of his property, apparently, after the poor-rates had been paid—the men, more lazily disposed, arranged themselves for a quiet smoke on the grassy bank.

"Well," said I, "when that redistribution of property takes place among our citizens which the prophets foretell, I think this is the particular bit which I should like to have registered in my name. With a neat little four-roomed cottage on this plateau, a fly-rod, and

the run of these woods in October, a republic under those conditions would not be such a bad thing after all."

"Ah! those days are coming, and sooner than people think," said Fergusson, with a sigh; "the only difference is that there will be no property left to divide." And the prosperous doctor, as he said this, took a melancholy pull at his havannah, as if he would at least finish that before the evil time arrived.

"At any rate," added Drew, "there will be such a lot of people to cut in for shares, that no one will be left with a bit of land bigger than what we are now sitting on." And the Squire threw a glance over the visible portion of his property up and down the valley, as though taking a farewell view of it before the preliminary staking out of lots commenced.

"Yes," continued Fergusson, "we are going ahead at a tremendous rate. The Irish Church destroyed; university tests abolished; purchase done away in the army; the House of Lords tottering; and now the Land Reform League and Republican Society are beginning their machinations, and they won't be easily satisfied."

"Yes indeed," chimed in the Squire, "Mr Merrifield has found it very easy to set the stone a-rolling, but it will puzzle him or anybody else to stop it."

Then both speakers relapsed into silence, puffing their cigars moodily, as if awaiting in despair the impending final crash of the avalanche.

"I infer from these remarks," said I, after a pause, "that I have the honour of being in the society of two Tories. This is quite an agreeable surprise, for I had been led to suppose that the genus was extinct."

"It will very soon be so," said Drew. "When men who have been

brought up in sound principles, and ought to know better, go over to the enemy's camp, what can you expect from those who have never been taught what is right, and who have nothing to lose by change and revolution?"

This was evidently meant for a hit at his brother squire, a stout hale man about twice Drew's weight, who, as he smiled good-humouredly at the attack, looked the very personification of substantial prosperity.

"Yes," added Fergusson; "but our friend here has merely followed the bad example set him. It is Strickland's defection that has broken up the county and made political consistency a byword."

Then it was explained to me how Mr Strickland, the greatest landed proprietor, and the head of the oldest family in the county, who had represented it for thirty years in the Conservative interest, had lately changed sides and voted for the disestablishment of the Irish Church and the abolition of university tests, and how it was understood Mr Merrifield was going to raise him to the peerage as a reward for his tergiversation.

"But I thought," said Drew, "you at least, Captain West, as a military man, would be a Conservative. Is it possible," he added, with a shrewd smile, "that these levelling doctrines can have permeated the army? Surely, now, you can't approve of the abolition of purchase?"

"Well, considering that we have got along for the last hundred years in my regiment without purchase, I don't suppose its abolition is likely to have a very disastrous effect upon us. But I claim to be a Conservative in the fullest sense of the term, at least if I understand what the name means. It is only, I suppose, an out and out Tory of the most bigoted school who would want to conserve

everything, good or bad. A reasonable Conservative, it may be assumed, only wants to preserve what is good, and is ready to improve what is bad. I am quite prepared to be judged by that canon."

"I fear it is only too true," said Fergusson, "that Captain West is but a Radical in disguise. Another poor erring brother, Morton, come to join your sheepfold."

But our discussion was interrupted at this point by the return of the young ladies laden with ferns and flowers; and the shaggy pony also having arrived for Eva to ride upon, with a shawl for a habit, we returned towards the house.

"He is a shrewd fellow, is our host," said Fergusson, as we were wending our way in Indian file along the narrow path from the summer-house—"and, as you may have inferred from his conversation, a man of sound political opinions. He ought to be in Parliament, and I hope we shall get him in some day."

"Why, I thought your party were at a complete discount in these regions. Surely Leatherby is Liberal to the backbone? They tell me that the last election was not even contested."

"No more it was, but then you may put that down to personal considerations. Mr Sheepshanks is everything to the town, and many people would stand by him who belong to the opposite side—certainly I should be very sorry to vote against him myself; and although Lord Wraymouth doesn't do much for the place directly, still he is in the Government, and has helped on a good many of the townfolk. But now all that sort of thing has come to an end with these competitive examinations, and I expect at the next election he will have to fight for his seat."

"What! even with Mr Sheep-

shanks to back him, and the tenants of all those neat cottages in the lower town sure to vote for him?"

"Well, I don't know exactly about Lord Wraymouth, because he has been our member for so long, and we are all creatures of habit; but Lord Wraymouth may be called up to the House of Lords any day, for old Lord Stowe must be close upon ninety, and we certainly shouldn't allow a new man to be brought in without a struggle. Besides, the present state of things can't last for ever. Mr Sheepshanks is an old man himself, and his grandson is a young boy at school, and there might be time before he could fill Mr Sheepshanks's place to establish the Conservative interests on a strong basis."

"But is not all this rather a looking ahead into the days of the republic, when there will be no squires left to stand for counties or boroughs either, and the possession of property of any sort will be a disqualification for becoming a representative of the people?"

"True," said the doctor, laughing, "there is no saying how soon these evil days may be upon us, and the prospect gives me the only sleepless nights I ever have had; but it is to be hoped the Conservative party will give a kick or two before it is finally trampled out."

"Well, but I suppose you hardly expect, amid your gloomy forebodings, that the principle of hereditary legislators will last as long as the respected Mr Sheepshanks. Does not the prospect of Lord Wraymouth coming down as the Earl of Stowe, with money in both pockets, to claim the suffrages of his old friends for a continuance of his seat in the Lower House, disturb your slumbers sometimes? However, at any rate, you have one consolation. Whatever happens, the inhabitants of these meadow-lands are like to go

on suffering from the rheumatics to the end of the chapter, and I should think not even a political millennium will clear the low-lying lanes of Leatherby from occasional typhus. That must be an abiding consolation to gentlemen of your profession, doctor. We poor soldiers may have our occupation stopped any day, but your fraternity will be allowed to go on killing people to the end of the chapter."

"Yes, but then by that time the citizen will expect to be attended for nothing, or else there will be a general participation of profits, the result being a very unfair day's wages for a fair day's work, which won't leave life worth having, or, at any rate, worth taking."

"If it's not an improper question, I should like to ask how far you carry politics into your professional practice, Mr Fergusson? Do you attend only those patients whose principles are of the right sort, or do you sink these little differences in the face of illness?"

"Well, to tell the truth, I doubt

if many of my patients know that I have any political opinions, and I am sure I very often know nothing about theirs. You must not suppose that I speak as openly to everybody as I have done to you, but I have known your wife and her sisters so many years, and they are so intimate with my girls, that I feel that I am speaking as to an old friend. And, oddly enough, I took it for granted that you must be on the right side. But in fact we have had no politics here since I have been settled in the place, and I don't suppose we shall have as long as Mr Sheepshanks lives."

At this point we reached the top of the woods, and were able to join in the general conversation as we returned to the house; and declining the Squire's offer of further refreshments, Mr Fergusson and his daughter mounted the gig, and the rest of us took our seats in the fly, and were drawn back to Leatherby in the summer twilight, by the Fergusson mare and her stable companion.

CHURCH REFORM.

"It hath been the wisdom of the Church of England, ever since the first compiling of her public Liturgy, to keep the mean between the two extremes of too much stiffness in refusing, and too much easiness in admitting, any variation from it. For as, on the one side, common experience sheweth that where a change hath been made of things advisedly established (no evident necessity so requiring), sundry inconveniences have thereupon ensued, and those many times more and greater than the evils which were intended to be remedied by such change; so, on the other hand, the particular forms of divine worship, and the rites and ceremonies appointed to be used therein being things in their own nature indifferent and alterable, and so acknowledged, it is but reasonable that, upon weighty and important considerations, according to the various exigencies of times and occasions, such changes and alterations should be made therein as to those that are in place of authority should from time to time seem either necessary or expedient."

It is surely not a little singular that a manual put forth with such a preface above two hundred years ago, and which has been in constant use ever since, should nevertheless have remained up to this day unchanged in word or syllable. When the excellent Bishop Sanderson (if it was he) drew up that preface to the Book of Common Prayer, after its last review at the Savoy Conference—not without some marked expressions of complacency on the part of himself and his colleagues, as having thoroughly overthrown the Presbyterian champions in that encounter—he could hardly have calculated upon their work lasting so long. How far this remarkable instance of permanence is due to the inherent excellence of

the work itself, how far to the conservative spirit of the English mind, and especially of the mind ecclesiastical, and how far to the conviction entertained by divines of all parties that all attempts at alteration would prove unsatisfactory, as they had before,—this may be a very doubtful question. The fact remains. The English Book of Common Prayer has continued to this day, with the exception of the necessary formal changes in the names of the sovereign and the royal family, identical with the sealed book of 1662. During the two intervening centuries (to use the words of a Church historian who cannot be charged with latitudinarian or revolutionary tendencies), "The kingdom has been making rapid strides in every species of improvement, and a corresponding alteration in the laws on every subject has taken place. During this period nothing has been remedied in the Church."*

Some of the causes of this long-continued and passive acquiescence are readily noted. The earnest minds who were most dissatisfied, on doctrinal grounds, with the formularies of public worship as finally settled by the conference at the Savoy, found their own remedy in Nonconformity. Forced by that Act of Uniformity, which was framed purposely against them by a hostile and triumphant majority, either to declare their "unfeigned assent and consent" to the whole contents of the book—for the authorities would not be satisfied with a mere promise to accept and use it—a body of more than two thousand men, ministers of the Church of England as then existing, though most of them had

* Bp. Short.

received only Presbyterian ordination (that is, not from the hands of bishops), withdrew or were ejected from their benefices or other recognised positions. Of the charity and the policy of that Act itself (for which, it must be remembered, Parliament and not the Church is responsible) we are not now going to speak. It has been characterised by one of the ablest of our modern prelates as having been "disastrous in its consequences as it was cruel in its intentions;"* by another as having been "devised for the express purpose of driving out of the Church many persons whom we should be glad nowadays to retain and employ as its ministers:"† and these judgments are hardly too severe. The result, so far as the Book of Common Prayer was concerned, was a quiet resting in what had been done. Within the now circumscribed fold of orthodoxy, not a tongue was moved against the established ritual. Baxter, Calamy, Bates, and their fellows, who had made their vain appeal at the last Conference, had no claim to be heard again after they had separated themselves from the body of the Church: while those of the Puritan party who had conformed unwillingly, and somewhat against their conscience, remained silent for very shame. There fell a deadness upon the Church of England after this forcible disruption: a disruption which, while it no doubt removed some incongruous and impracticable elements, still carried away with it an immense amount of vigour and earnest spiritual life which, under happier management, might have been retained and assimilated. There were some great divines, no doubt, and many saintly lives among the members of the Church during the Hanoverian reigns; but with the great mass of those who profes-

sed Church principles it was a period of apathy. It is not necessary to adopt the one-sided statements of Lord Macaulay, and still less to countenance the virulent slander of Mr Goldwin Smith when he describes the chief supporters of the Established Church as "profligate intriguers, practical atheists, and political sharpers;" but the chill of worldliness and indolence had followed the fever-heat of the Reformation, and such zeal as there was left in the body showed itself far more in the persecution of the hated sectaries than in any desire for internal reform. The pictures of the Church in those days, which cynical historians have drawn for us, by piecing together fragments of contemporary notices which were often confessedly satirical, do more credit to their ingenuity than their fidelity. But it seems equally certain that on the other side we have often had presented to us views of the "good old Church of England," which never had any existing original, and which are only the reflex of the warm imagination of the excellent writers. Probably the golden age of churches as of nations was never seen but by the eye of poet or prophet; but at least we must not look for it in England in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. When was that ideal past, when congregations of earnest worshippers crowded our churches, listened reverently to orthodox preachers, and followed intelligently the order of Common Prayer? Let us only remember what education was in those days, and then take down the sermons of Hammond or Beveridge, or even those of "silver-tongued" Smith, preached to his rural congregation at Husband's Bosworth, and ask ourselves honestly, how many of their hearers could have gained any edification therefrom? Here and there, no

* Bp. Thirlwall.

† Bp. of London's Charge, Dec. 1862.

doubt, remarkable men made, each in their place, remarkable parishes, as they would now. Courtly and gracious gentlemen like George Herbert, in whom the real humility of the Christian only threw an additional charm over his aristocratic refinement, could by personal influence and attraction, as much as by anything else, draw together many of their parishioners even to week-day prayers; men of a coarser stamp, but equal earnestness and zeal, like good Bishop Wilson, could exercise a discipline almost primitive in its nature over an attached people; and, in many quiet corners, some of those unknown benefactors of the world who are content to do good and be forgotten, kept up among their congregations not only orthodox Church principles, but devout Christian practice. But the great mass of the people remained, as they had been in the days before the Reformation, in a state of semi-heathenism. Their religion was little better than superstition. They probably attended the church services somewhat more regularly than they do now; they listened, or did not listen, to words which were not much more intelligible to them now in their own "vulgar tongue" than they had been in the medieval Latin. They continued to regard the whole Service as the priest's business rather than their own, and were not critical in matters which lay, as they thought, beyond their province. Nonconformity, on the other hand, was active and restless. Those who professed it were, in the very nature of things, earnest men, most of them sufferers for conscience' sake; they were fanatics, many of them, and their religion had more zeal in it, perhaps, than love; but it is no disparagement to the Established Church to say of them that, in proportion to their numbers, there was far less coldness and indifference about spiritual things. The Nonconfor-

mist's principle was, not to limit or quench the spirit by any bonds of formality: the Church-of-England-man's boast was, "not to meddle with them that are given to change."

The remedies proposed by amateur liturgical reformers have in many cases contributed to make the very name of such reform distasteful to sober members of the Church. Richard Baxter, at the Savoy Conference, was not content with the exceptions taken by his colleagues to the Liturgy as it stood, or with the additions which they proposed, but drew up and presented to the Commissioners a new form of Public Prayer, which he styled "The Reformed Liturgy," and which, with a curious self-complacency, he thought might be accepted as a substitute for the time-honoured words of the existing office. The claim which he and others set up for the right of the minister at public worship to use extemporary prayer is at least intelligible enough; but that any man should have seriously supposed that his own printed compilation of devotions should be adopted as the ritual-book of the ancient Church of England is only to be accounted for by bearing in mind the unaccountable vagaries of spiritual conceit. The "Revised Prayer-Book" put forth in 1852, and "The Prayer-Book Remodelled" of 1860—"adapted to the Men and Circumstances of the present Times"—were certainly not happy specimens of the taste or the discretion of modern liturgical reformers. The latter, we remember, by way of improvement upon the old-fashioned rubric, directed the minister in attorney's English to "lay his hand on the shoulder of the baptised party;" spoke of the Ten Commandments, by way of making them more intelligible to the unlearned, as the "Decalogue;" discarded (in order, we must suppose, to meet the

"circumstances of the times") the grand old marriage vow, "for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, till death us do part;" changed "this man and this woman" into "these our friends;" * struck out altogether the prayer of humble confession before the administration of the Communion, softened down the words "miserable sinners" in the General Confession, and erased them wholly from the Litany. While permitting the words of administration in the Communion office to be used to "as many as can conveniently kneel or stand before the Table at one time," it insisted on the bishop putting a long question to each candidate for Confirmation individually. The authors of this improved edition prudently remained anonymous. But the suggestions of some of those who ought to have spoken with authority on such a question have not always been much happier. A bishop of Lincoln, in his charge for 1858, admitting that the Morning Service was "perhaps sometimes over long," could hit upon no better expedient in order to its possible abridgment than this,—“that in country parishes the singing should be diminished"! So helplessly bound was a man, otherwise able and sensible, in the trammels of uniformity, that he would have retrenched that portion of the service which to the unlearned especially is a favourite form of devotion, and which is felt by all as a wholesome relaxation from the graver duty of continuous prayer, rather than ad-

mit the notion of any change in the letter of the Prayer-Book. The same feeling—conscientious, no doubt, on their parts—has led the compilers of the new Lectionary into what, amongst many undoubted improvements, we cannot help thinking a most unhappy mistake. They felt that the Morning Service was too long; and the only course which seemed open to them in the way of remedy was to shorten the Scripture lessons. On the theory of a Daily Service, and that service being regularly attended—a theory which every one knows to be wholly visionary—this abbreviation is wise and good. But when it practically comes to this, that on the Sunday mornings a congregation of unlearned worshippers have frequently some twenty verses only—often less†—out of one of the Gospels read to them, instead of a whole chapter as in the old calendar, the loss is grievous indeed. Long prayers might be wearisome, and to many unintelligible; long sermons might be still more wearisome to one class of hearers, and still more unintelligible to another; but surely no man, wise or simple, who ever entered within a church-door with but a moderate comprehension of what he went there for, ever complained of weariness of the grand words of the Evangelists.

The main difficulty which stands in the way of any alteration in the present order of Common Prayer is, that there are two distinct classes of its reformers. Those who met so lately in St James's Hall were men representing almost all shades of

* "It is the form of words with which a pauper is married out of the union, and the very same form of words is used when, with all the solemnity and prodigal magnificence of imperial state, under the roof of the Royal Chapel of St George at Windsor, the heir to the crown of this country weds the woman of his choice. I said the woman of his choice: for, thank Heaven, the Prayer-Book makes no distinction of rank. Be the bride who she may—a princess in diamonds or a beggar-lass in tatters—she is all the same a 'woman'—good English 'woman'—no 'lady.'"—Mr Beresford Hope, "Social Influence of the Prayer-Book," Ridgway, 1863.

† In twenty-six of the daily lessons the average is under ten.

doctrinal opinion, and their views upon the subject of reform may on the whole be fairly expressed in the words used by one of the speakers—Mr Ryle; they demand “more liberty, more elasticity in the Prayer-Book services,” which have been hitherto “too long, too complicated, and not adapted to the busy hard-working men of the present day.” Mr Ryle, who may be taken as a fair representative, as he is certainly a very able one, of the views commonly known as “evangelical,” declares distinctly that he does not desire what is sometimes understood as “Liturgical Revision;” that is, he does not wish to see any doctrinal changes made in the Prayer-Book. These are his words:—

“There are, doubtless, many words and expressions in the Prayer-Book which I should like to see altered. They are liable, as they now stand, to be misconstrued, wrested, and misinterpreted, partly from inherent obscurity of meaning, and partly from the unfair handling of prejudiced, unlearned, or unstable men. I would gladly see all such words and expressions removed. But there is not the slightest chance of this being done. A Royal Commission for Liturgical Revision would include Ritualists and Neologians, as well as Evangelicals. From such a Commission I should expect nothing but evil. It would do more harm than good, if it did anything at all. In short, I would rather ‘bear the ills I know, than flee to others which I know not of.’ Looking calmly at the condition of the Church of England, about the last thing I should like to see would be a Commission for reconstructing, revising, or adding to our Liturgy. Without a special miracle, such as we have no right to expect, the poor Prayer-Book would come forth from its hands (if, indeed, it ever came forth again alive) completely marred and spoiled.”*

These words carry with them all the greater weight, because they pro-

ceed not from one of that “High-Church” party with whom “the Prayer-Book, the whole Prayer-Book, and nothing but the Prayer-Book” is a kind of watchword of orthodoxy, but from one to whose mind some expressions contained in that volume—for instance, in the Baptismal service—do not altogether commend themselves. But there is another party within the pale of the Church who openly demand, on doctrinal grounds, what they would call the expurgation of all which to their minds savours of the old taint of Rome. There exists a Society for “promoting such a Revision of the Book of Common Prayer as will strengthen its Protestant and Scriptural character,” by changes (as their schedule goes on to set forth) in the Communion service, and in the offices for Baptism and Ordination. What they demand is not that “large measure of division, abbreviation, and simplification” with which Mr Ryle and his friends would be content, and which the St James’s Hall reformers propose, but a reconstruction of the services of the Church of England upon a different—and a narrower—platform. Their chairman, at one of their last meetings, declared boldly that he foresaw the possible result of the success of such a movement, and was prepared to risk it in what he considered the interests of truth. “No doubt there will be a terrible struggle, which may end in the entire disruption of the Church; but we must do our best. I congratulate the meeting on the prospect before us.”† We are not concerned, in these pages, with questions of doctrine. It is the legitimate boast of the Church of England that she is comprehensive, as a national church should be.

* ‘Seven Papers on Church Reform,’ No. iv., p. 4.

† Speech of Lord Ebury at Willis’s Rooms, June 28, 1871.

Any changes made on distinctly doctrinal grounds would drive more good men out of the Church than they would ever draw into it. We may so reconstruct the Prayer-Book, as Lord Lyttelton says, "that it shall become the shibboleth of a party, and not the *vox totius Ecclesie*." The question is not, whether, if we had now to draw up forms of public worship *ab initio*, we should draw them exactly in the words chosen or adopted by the compilers of the Prayer-Book; whether men of this or that school of thought within the Church could not draw up forms which would embody more satisfactorily their own particular views; but whether, having such forms already in use, in the general tone and spirit of which almost all agree, the intrinsic beauty and fitness of which nearly all combine to praise, and whose few antiquated or questionable formulas all moderate men agree to interpret in some general sense which if not strictly logical is largely charitable, we shall or shall not be content to retain these as they are. It is not wise to sacrifice this common heritage of the Church of England in the hope of satisfying a few scrupulous consciences, with the certainty of offending and alienating many more. The existing forms of expression, unpalatable as they may be to some good men, have at least this to be said in their defence—they are ancient. They are not, to the men of the present generation, whatever they may have been to the generation in which they were composed, the expression of any party triumph, the assertions of a dominant majority, the shibboleth applied to test suspected members; they are the cold crystallisation of processes from which all heat has evaporated ages ago. We are not among those who would cast stones at the "evangelical" minister, who uses the words of the Baptismal

office in not precisely the sense which its first compilers would attach to it; nor do we anathematise the "High Church" priest as a Romanist in disguise, because when in the prayer for the Church militant he has to give thanks for the faithful departed, he pauses for a moment, and breathes also a silent aspiration for the repose of their souls. We rather rejoice that men of such different modes of thought should be found doing the Church's work in their several ways, and uniting at least to fight its battle against the flood-tide of modern scepticism and infidelity. The Church can spare neither the one nor the other. We do not believe that either the one or the other, in remaining officers in her service, are actuated by motives of self-interest: and we incline to honour the men who, rather than break the bond of unity, make up their minds to swallow—even though it require a strong gulp—some of their own conscientious scruples. When Nelson saw a great opportunity of serving his country before him, he interpreted the strict letter of duty very liberally indeed. With his glass to his blind eye, he "could not see" the signal of recall. No one thinks him the less loyal to the discipline of the service in which he was commissioned, because he saw a larger duty overriding the less. It is not always we should agree with the Dean of Westminster; but we go with him thoroughly in the words which he spoke the other day in St James's Hall:—

"Large and wide I wish our Church to be: large and wide it is already: but I cannot conceive anything more ineffective and more stupid than would be a church consisting only of liberal churchmen, or a church consisting only of conservative churchmen, or a church consisting only of evangelical churchmen, or a church consisting only of

high-churchmen. Let us include them all."

If indeed it were possible, by some few modifications in the wording of equivocal phrases in the Liturgy, to bring back to the national Church any large number of conscientious Nonconformists—which at one time seems to have been possible—it might be worth while to make such alteration, even at the expense of alienating some few uncompromising Churchmen. Those who will make no sacrifices of this kind for the sake of unity may be very zealous and learned controversialists, but they are not the most valuable members of the Church. But the truth is, that no such large comprehension seems possible now to hope for, as the result of any such moderate concessions. A change, the causes of which we cannot here discuss, but a change certainly not for the better, has come over the spirit of Nonconformity. It has not only become far more powerful, but it stands upon a very different basis, and professes quite other objects, from those of the Nonconformists in 1673, when Baxter thought that a few comparatively unimportant changes in the ritual would bring in the whole body of Independents and Presbyterians.* It is otherwise now. Some tentative efforts in the way of union have proceeded from the side of the Church, more especially towards the Wesleyans; but even from that comparatively friendly body, we have heard of nothing like a general response. Mr Binney—no unworthy authority—speaking on the part of the Independents, saw no hope of

such a comprehension twelve years ago, and even pronounced a diversity of denominations a necessity of human nature—possibly even a providential provision for its needs.† And this is a feeling which is not likely to have grown weaker since.

It seems, then, that there would be little really to gain, and possibly a good deal to lose, by any revision of the Prayer-Book made in the interests of party, or which would evoke the spirit of controversy. If all Churchmen were moderate and patient, and could make allowances for other aspects of truth than that in which it appears to their own minds, it would be very possible to get rid by consent of some verbal stumbling-blocks, on the charitable ground that they are such to weaker minds. But, as men are, they will find it easier to agree to make no change in such matters, than to agree as to the changes to be made.

Some struggles have been made during the present generation against the mere formal bonds of conformity, even within the Church itself. We are not speaking now of capricious mutilations of the regular order of public service and interpolations of long extemporary prayers on the part of individuals, made principally in remote country parishes, which have been winked at by bishops and congregations. Some years ago, before rubrics had come up again into fashion, a stranger could never be sure, upon entering a country church among the Welsh mountains or in the Devonshire coombs, how far his pocket Common Prayer-Book would prove a safe and reliable guide. The elasticity, in many of these cases, was as great as the

* The making the use of the surplice, of the cross in baptism, and of certain words in the burial service, optional; admitting Presbyterian ministers, on subscription and conformity, without reordination; allowing the elements at Communion to be received standing, and admitting parents as sponsors. [This last has now been allowed by Convocation.]

† See 'Lights and Shadows of Church Life in Australia,' by Rev. T. Binney: London, 1860.

most liberal Church reformer could desire: though, to be sure, the liberty taken might not always be exactly in his own favourite direction. The great question of gown or surplice was decided, not by the shade of ecclesiastical opinion on the part of the wearer, but by the fact of his living in the parish, or, what was then quite as probable, some five or six miles off. In the former case he wore his gown; in the latter, the churchwardens not providing the black garment (which is, in point of fact, nothing more than the ancient clerical private dress) he went through the whole service in the parish surplice. Lessons were changed, litanies omitted, extempore prayers and colloquial remarks inserted, at the discretion or indiscretion of the officiating clergyman, without any fear of complaint from "aggrieved parishioners." But the variations from established usage to which we now particularly refer are of a deliberate and specific character. In large towns, the Communion office and the Litany have in many instances been separated from the Morning Prayer, and used at distinct services at other hours—the former frequently in the early morning, or late in the afternoon, according as the views of the incumbent are to be identified as "high" or "low:" whether he adopts in the first case what he believes to be the primitive usage, or in the latter strives to accommodate the privileges of the Church to the needs and the convenience of the lower ranks of his congregation; both practices, in the eyes of those who wear no ecclesiastical spectacles, and are so ignorant in such matters as to regard them merely by the light of common-sense, are alike innocent and commendable, as helping to enlarge the area of devotional exercises, and to multiply opportunities which, after all, are not too readily embraced. Any casual visitor to St Alban's, Holborn,

will have no reason to complain that Church services proceed in one dull unvarying round, which allows no scope for the idiosyncrasies of minister or congregation. Setting aside all questions of vestments, incense, and genuflections, he will find there musical and other interpolations which, whether improvements or no, are at any rate very distinct variations. One of the officials of that church, at the late "Reformation" meeting at St James' Hall, with much *naïveté* and not without some truth, reminded an audience who were apparently clamorous for "greater liberty and elasticity" in the services, that "within two miles and a half of that hall" they would find nearly all the reforms they wished for actually carried out, and even, as he observed, "added to." But it is not only in one special direction that the Church has shown an inclination of late years to step out of the beaten track of uniformity. A bishop of London has been seen preaching in Covent Garden Market: a bishop of Oxford has addressed crowds of mechanics in the workshops of Manchester; a bishop of Peterborough, in the Corn Exchange at Northampton—in that place almost in very truth a missionary to the heathen—has commanded by his earnest eloquence the attention of radical shoemakers who openly boast themselves as secularists. Clergy and laymen, of what is known as the "evangelical" type, have been preaching on the stage of theatres; while, in the well-known London Mission, men of quite another school of thought went out in solemn procession and celebrated the "Stations of the Cross," and sang hymns on the Passion in the streets of St Giles', and were not only not insulted, but listened to with a curious respect. The *Miserere*—a metrical Litany, sung kneeling—has been introduced in what are known as "Mission Services" in Lent, apparently with the

best effect on the devotion of crowded and earnest congregations.* The Church, like all large and time-incrusted bodies, is slow to move, no doubt; but it is impossible to look at these several efforts, so various in their character, so unanimous in their motive, confined to no one party and no one direction, and yet contend that she abides by the principle that her "strength is to sit still." Church Reform had begun in many ways—vague, spasmodic, tentative, as the movements of limbs which have been long cramped and bound—but it had begun in earnest before the Ritual Commission was appointed, before Convocation received its "Letters of Business," or the "Church Reform Union" propounded its resolutions in St James's Hall.

The point of difficulty has always been, by what authority could any changes in the Book of Common Prayer be made, so as to give them any chance of general acceptance by the great body of Churchmen? One of the earliest and most earnest of our modern Church reformers felt this very strongly. "The difficulty," said Dr Arnold, "will always be practically, who is to reform it? For the clergy have a horror of the House of Commons, and the Parliament and the country will never trust the matter to the clergy."† In this latter view, Dr Arnold was probably wrong. The active interest taken in such questions by the laity has always been less than their importance deserves. This may be partly accounted for by the fact, that while a clergyman is bound to declare his "unfeigned assent and consent" to every sentence in the Prayer-Book, the

layman does not feel constrained to give more than a general adhesion to the prayers, the creeds, and the teaching of the Church, and may make, without much forcing of his conscience, very large reservations of private opinion as to certain forms of expression or even dogmatic assertions on what he holds to be minor points. To take one strong instance: the having to pronounce officially what are called the "damnatory" clauses of the Athanasian Creed is a very different thing from merely having to listen to them with the power of mental silence as to their awful conclusions.‡ The complaint of the laity, when they do complain—and they are wonderfully long-suffering in such matters—is rather as to the length of some of the services, and what they consider the needless repetitions which they contain, than as to any doctrinal difficulties. These last are felt much more strongly, where they are felt at all, by individuals among the clergy, and the demand for this kind of reform comes from them almost exclusively. We believe that the country *would* trust the clergy for any moderate measure of revision; and that if such a measure could be passed by them with anything like an unanimous voice, Parliament would probably accept it, and would even be glad to rest any responsibility for such changes upon the Church itself. With regard to the other difficulty, no doubt Dr Arnold was right. If the clergy in his day had "a horror of the House of Commons"—which is rather a strong way of putting it, but Arnold was a man of vigorous speech, and the passage, it must be remembered, occurs in a

* So in the little town of Wilton, in this last March.

† Letter to Tucker, *Life*, &c., i. 81.

‡ We knew a layman (it was certainly many years ago), an old-fashioned Tory and a most regular and conscientious Churchman, who, whenever the prayer for the High Court of Parliament was read while a Whig Government was in office, got up and dusted the knees of his trousers, and did not kneel down again until the prayer was over. He probably thought the House, under such *régime*, was past praying for.

private letter—they have certainly no reason to place any greater confidence in it now, considering its present composition, upon any ecclesiastical questions. An alteration in the public services and ritual of the Church of England which should be forced upon the Church by the sole authority of a Royal Commission or an Act of Parliament, would unquestionably be repudiated by an overwhelming majority of its ordained ministers, and of the earnest and thoughtful amongst its lay members. Such a step would be an intolerable tyranny, and is not likely to be attempted. No honest Nonconformist would so abuse his position in the House as to vote in favour of a proceeding so subversive of his own professions and principles.

But in the recent revival of the full powers of Convocation there ought to be a very hopeful prospect for all moderate Church reformers. When it was once more, in 1853, permitted to meet in actual debate after a silence of so many years, its renewed vitality was regarded by many with suspicion and dislike, and by many with contempt and ridicule. Lord Stanhope thought that "by the revival of its active powers the enemies of religion will often be gratified with the unseemly sight of conflicting divines." * Its best friends were timid and doubtful as to the results. The Bishop of Gloucester, in 1859, thought it "could not sit more than three days without getting into a storm." The 'Times,' from its eminence of indifferentism, launched what it considered very safe sneers at "that eccentric and nebulous affair called the Convocation of the Province of Canterbury," which "by its actions betrayed the rottenness of its condition, and its almost farcical character." Mr Gladstone, to whose good Churchmanship this revival is unquestionably in

great measure due, probably found himself laughed at by many of his colleagues for so Quixotic an idea. He certainly felt great doubts of the success of his own experiment, and kept his new-made ecclesiastical monster in very tight leading-strings. Only the briefest sittings were allowed by the president, the archbishop, in the fear lest too great activity might be the signal for their suppression; and what there was of vagueness and weakness in its early movements may be easily accounted for on this ground; there was a natural eagerness to do a great deal, whereas there was really time to do nothing. Even when this ecclesiastical body behaved so very much better than had been expected of it, that it appeared to cautious politicians that more liberty of action might be safely given, there were technical difficulties—quite beyond the comprehension of an unlearned and practical public—which stood unhappily in the way of carrying into effect even the slightest and apparently most innocent measures which were formally passed during its brief session. The very awkward division of Convocation into two separate and independent bodies of York and Canterbury—a kind of two-headed Parliament—made any united action complicated and tedious, even with the best understanding on both sides. When this preliminary difficulty had been overcome, obstacles arose in another quarter. A special service for harvest thanksgivings, very much required, was drawn up with much pains and care, and issued by Convocation in 1863, and an appeal made to the Crown for authority to use it. The Crown lawyers gave a very cautious opinion. The Lord Chancellor, upon being referred to, "thought it so doubtful whether the Crown had authority to make

* History of England, i. ch. 9.

such an order," that he advised it not to be done; and the office which had been composed—a very excellent one—still remains, as to its use in the Church, in a state of suspension between legality and illegality. Of the alterations made by Convocation in certain of the ecclesiastical canons, that which gave permission for parents to stand as sponsors for their children has never passed into formal law, owing to technical difficulties of a similar kind. But, in the thirty-sixth canon, in the case of clergy appointed to any ecclesiastical living, a much more general form of adhesion to the doctrine of the Book of Common Prayer has been substituted by Convocation in place of that "unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything therein contained," which was required under the old Act of Uniformity, and which pressed heavily on some tender consciences.* This alteration had been recommended by the Royal Commission of 1869. The address to the Crown "to grant a royal licence to make, promulge, and execute" this new form of the canon (with some necessary alterations in those which followed), passed both Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury in 1865; the licence was granted, the new canons were "solemnly published and signed," and have become the law of the Church. Even if the relief thus afforded may appear to be of a somewhat limited and technical nature, this first step in any practi-

cal legislation in such matters was an event in the history of the Church.

The sanction by Convocation of the new Lectionary soon followed. Here, again, there was, if not exactly a collision, a want of cordial action between the ecclesiastical and the civil authorities. The Table of Lessons itself was the work of a Royal Commission; its framers had been selected by the Minister, not by the Church, though undoubtedly they were a body to whom such selection might safely be trusted. The Table, as recommended in the Third Report of the Ritual Commissioners, was formally adopted by Convocation, though Mr Austin Bruce, on the part of the Government, had declined to accede to the request of Convocation that the Report should be "laid before" their House, and would do no more than promise that "any representations which might be made upon it by Convocation should receive the careful attention of her Majesty's Government."

But the proceedings of Convocation assumed a new shape and a far higher importance when in February last, at the opening of the session, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, each in their province, announced to the assembled members that they had received "the Royal Licence and Letters of Business, commanding the House to proceed to the consideration of certain weighty matters." It is unnecessary here to discuss the question which

* Under the old 36th canon, the form of subscription upon presentation to an ecclesiastical benefice ran thus:—

"I, A. B., do here declare my unfeigned assent and consent to all and everything contained and prescribed in and by the Book of Common Prayer, &c. &c."

Under the altered canon it runs as follows:—

"I, A. B., do solemnly make the following declaration: I assent to the Thirty-nine Articles of Religion, and to the Book of Common Prayer, and of Ordering of Bishops, Priests, and Deacons. I believe the doctrine of the United Church of England and Ireland as therein set forth to be agreeable to the Word of God, and in public prayer and administration of the Sacraments I will use the form in the said book prescribed and none other, except so far as shall be ordered by lawful authority."

was at once raised by some of the more learned of the body, zealous on behalf of their ancient privileges,—whether, having once received their “writ of summons,” this “royal licence” was or was not required. The “letters of business” (though, as one critic observed, “not quite rightly worded”—a weakness to which royal missives seem especially liable) were at least admitted to be a very different thing: they gave authority directly from the Crown to deal with the Book of Common Prayer; and the Convocations of both provinces at once proceeded to deal with it accordingly. The Fourth Report of the Ritual Commission had recommended certain changes in the rubrics,—which had indeed been suggested by a Committee of Convocation so early as 1854. These were chiefly in the way of allowing a shorter form of daily service for ordinary weekdays, and a new form of Evening Prayer, differently arranged, to be used on Sundays wherever (as is the case in almost all large towns) a third service is held, to avoid the repetition of the present form of afternoon prayers, often by the same minister and very much the same congregation. These recommendations were in the main adopted, after considerable discussion and a conference between the representatives of York and Canterbury, and the joint resolutions of the two bodies were finally issued in the following shape:—

“That it is desirable (A) that a shortened form of daily service taken from the morning and evening prayer be allowed on week-days in parish churches and chapels in lieu of, and in cathedral and collegiate churches in addition to, the ordinary morning and evening service, provided such shortened form be first approved by the Church in her Convocations. That such shortened service be formed by omitting (except on Christmas Day, Ash Wednesday, Good Friday, and Ascension

Day), at the discretion of the minister, the Exhortation, the *Venite*, one or more psalms (one, at least, being always retained, or one portion of the 119th Psalm), one lesson (not being a proper lesson), one canticle, and all or any of the prayers following the Third Collect, the service to conclude with the prayer of St Chrysostom and ‘The Grace of Our Lord Jesus Christ.’ That in all churches and chapels, whether cathedral, collegiate, or parochial, the priest in charge may on special occasions employ such prayers taken from the Prayer-Book and such lessons from the Holy Scriptures as to him may seem best, provided always that such service shall be allowed by the Ordinary. That it is desirable that all doubts should be removed as to whether sermons must of necessity be preceded by the divine service appointed for the day. But that no prayer be used with such sermon, except the Bidding Prayer, or such prayer as shall be taken from the Book of Common Prayer.

“(B.) On Sundays and holidays, when the order of morning and evening prayer is duly said at some other hours, it shall be lawful for the minister of any cathedral, collegiate or parochial church, or of any chapel, to use as an additional service any form of prayer which may be taken from the Book of Common Prayer, except from the office for the celebration of the Holy Communion, with psalms and hymns, if such service shall be allowed by the Ordinary.

“(C.) That it is desirable that all doubts should be removed which have arisen as to the lawfulness of using in any church the Morning Prayer, Litany, and Communion office, each as a separate service, and that it be lawful to use the Morning Prayer, the Litany, and the order for the administration of the Lord’s Supper or Holy Communion together, or as separate services in varying order, at the discretion of the minister under the direction of the Ordinary.

“(D.) That it is desirable that the forms of prayer referred to in the foregoing resolutions should be allowed to be used in schools, chapels, and such-like buildings, in lieu of the ordinary service.”

A Bill founded on these resolutions, introduced by the Archbishop

of Canterbury, has already passed through Committee in the Lords, and will, it may be hoped, go through the other House without material alteration.

Certainly this is but a very modest measure of liturgical reform. It leaves very many urgent demands, made from different quarters, unanswered and unsatisfied. The length of the Sunday morning service remains unrelieved, except when the clergyman may choose to make the Communion office a separate service, held at a different hour: a remedy plainly unsuitable in most country districts, and inconvenient where an incumbent works single-handed. The repetitions of the Lord's Prayer, of the prayer for the Queen, and of the collect for the day, will still be the rule and not the exception. The long Ash Wednesday service will continue to trouble the grandsons, as it troubled the sons, of the excellent nobleman who once complained of it to the 'Times:' and we shall still be made, on that day, to express a wish for the restoration of that "godly discipline" of putting people "to open shame," which, however suited to primitive times, we feel to be as undesirable as it is impossible in our own. And, on the other hand, we must continue to use the same unchanged forms of prayer to welcome the joyous tidings of Christmas and the solemn memories of Good Friday: days upon which every earnest worshipper would surely desire a special and appropriate service at least as much as for a harvest thanksgiving. No authority is given for the collection of the alms of the congregation at an evening service, though this in many places secures the largest attendance, and the offertory has been found upon experiment to be one of the most successful as it is certainly the most primitive form of raising money for the needs of the Church. But it may be as

well that the first steps in a direction so new, and upon ground so difficult, should have been taken with caution. Still, it is hardly to be supposed that these liturgical reforms are to be final; and we cannot but hope that, before the next session of Convocation, some further rearrangement of the Prayer-Book services may be agreed upon, such as will satisfy reasonable persons without offending too much those feelings of conservatism which in such matters especially ought to be very carefully respected. No change should be attempted which would not command a very general assent, and the aim in each case should be rather to supply an acknowledged want, than to redress a doubtful grievance. The recent proceedings in the Synod of the disestablished Church of Ireland are an example we do not wish to see followed. There is one strong reason for carrying out any reforms which may commend themselves to the calm judgment of the Church as speedily as may be, once for all. It could not be endured that the English Prayer-Book should be, like Oxford Examination Statutes, kept in such a perpetual state of flux that the enactments of one year become obsolete the next.

Some rearrangement of the revenues of the Church, at present so unequally distributed, appears also very desirable in the best interests of the Church itself. We are no advocates for the equalisation of livings, or the cutting down deaneries and bishoprics. There should be prizes in the Church, taking it as a profession, as well as in all other professions. A pauper clergy would be in the eyes of all sensible men an enormous evil. And if it be said that such prizes do by no means, as a rule, fall to the lot of the most efficient and meritorious, it may be replied with great truth that cases of mere patronage and nepotism are growing daily fewer, and the public

and private conscience is much more awake to responsibility in the matter of spiritual appointments. Nor is merit the only element of success in secular professions. But the parochial system of endowments has become a great anomaly. There are agricultural villages with populations of 500 or 600, in which the rector receives a thousand a-year; and town districts, with their population of 50,000, where the endowment is £150. The towns have grown up since the days when men endowed the Church with the tithes of their manors; while in the agricultural districts, if the population has not fallen away to any very great extent, the value of land has considerably risen. Surely he would be no profane meddler with sacred things, but a veritable benefactor to the Church, who could secure some redistribution of these unequal revenues. The dioceses of the bishops have been rearranged, and their incomes readjusted; there seems no valid reason why the parochial landmarks and endowments should enjoy an immutability which has been denied to episcopal. There might be some difficulty as concerns the rights of private patrons, but greater obstacles have been overcome of late years by Acts of Parliament. A measure founded upon the principle of the Endowed Schools Act, under which local benefactions may under certain circumstances be diverted into channels of greater usefulness—appropriating, for instance, a certain portion of the income of rural parishes with small populations to the endowment of the neighbouring town—would seem to be entirely in accordance with the spirit of religious endowments, and ought to be thankfully accepted by the Church.

A great deal has been said of late years, justly or unjustly, about the exceeding weariness of preachers. There were too many sermons, said

irreverent lay critics, and mostly very dull ones. Indeed this cry of "dull sermons" grew so loud at one time, that a well-known Oxford preacher published a sermon on the subject, and took those very two words for his title-page. The House of Commons has just been asked to patronise the very queerest remedy for this ecclesiastical evil. Mr Cowper Temple has brought in a Bill to admit into the pulpits of the Church any layman—not necessarily a member of the Church—who may have, or fancy that he has, a gift of preaching. Now we are very far from saying that all sermons preached by orthodox parsons are models of eloquence or even of good sense. We too "have been in Arcadia," and have heard dull sermons in its country churches—and, for that matter, in town churches as well—these last all the duller for being more pretentious. We by no means think that a Bachelor of Arts degree and perhaps some twelve months' training at a theological college convert a young man at once into a divine and an orator; or that every minister of riper years, excellent man as he may be in many ways, is equal to the composition of two original essays every week, or even to the judicious compilation of such discourses from his theological library. If there is one point more than another, so far as our own private comfort and edification in church-going is concerned, on which we should like to bind the clergy down to the strict letter of the rubric, it would be the omission of that supererogatory sermon in the afternoon service. Very many among themselves would be heartily thankful for the relief; but all who know anything of the intellectual calibre and the tastes of those who form the bulk of an ordinary congregation—to say nothing here of their spiritual needs—will confess that such retrenchment of the pulpit

duties would be a step backwards so far as the influence and usefulness of the Church is concerned. The majority of a preacher's audience relish his platitudes and commonplace. Provided he be not dull and dead in manner, his matter need be of no very high intellectual quality in order to win the attention, and satisfy the expectations, of the most respectable pewholders. The clever gentlemen who write articles for the newspapers and reviews seem to think that all sermons are preached, or ought to be preached, to them. They quite ignore the multitude. Dull sermons! are they the only utterances that are dull? Are there no dull speeches made in the Houses of Parliament, at public dinners, at national festivals? No dull papers read at literary and other societies—no dull novels printed and published, and read and digested by the reading public without a suspicion of their dulness? "I don't deny the women are fools," says the excellent Mrs Poyser—"God Almighty made 'em to match the men." We admit that there are dull sermons—very dull; but the adaptations of Providence seem, in this case also, discernible.

However, the complaint as to sermons has long been twofold; that they are too many, and too dull. The remedy Mr Cowper Temple suggests is to throw the trade open, as one may say. This proceeding will not make, nor we suppose is it intended to make, the sermons fewer in number; will it make them better in quality? There is an old Latin proverb which has been held to contain some wisdom—"Cuique in sua arte credendum est." Professional preaching may vary very much in quality; but we should feel more comfortable ourselves in "sitting under" it, as a rule. We have seen professional actors who have been utter sticks;

but the comparative woodenness of the majority of amateurs—who fancied themselves good performers all the same—is very notable. The French commanders in the late war seem to have made mistakes; but no heaven-born generals took the field from among the civilians. Unquestionably there are laymen who would preach admirable sermons, whom one would walk miles to hear. If Sir Roundell Palmer or Lord Hatherly—or, in order to throw the Church pulpits open as liberally as even the promoters of this Bill could wish, we will say Mr Forster—would embody their high-toned principles occasionally in the form of a sermon, and set them forth with all their powers of lucid argument, we should have little doubt of their commanding the attention of their congregations. But we doubt exceedingly whether these gentlemen, or any like them, could be induced to stump the country, even during the Parliamentary vacation, as preachers. Our visions of the lay-preachers who would be called into life by such a measure as this, are of a very different character. The laymen who will volunteer for such service will not always be those of the highest ability and the most profound good sense; nor have the parsons a monopoly of self-complacent mediocrity. A bishop's licence will no more confer the gift of eloquence on the wearers of black neckcloths than of white ones. Most of us know some well-meaning laymen who preach now, whenever they can get an audience, and who, moreover, insist upon being attended to, which is more than the parson ventures to do; and we can imagine how these gentlemen would hold forth, if they got into a place in which no one could interrupt or contradict them. Even lay genius is apt to grow wearisome when it takes to sermonising. "Charles," said Coleridge once to his friend Lamb, "I think you never heard

me preach?" "P-p-preach!" stut-tered out Lamb (who would not have made a very reverent lay-substitute): "by——, I n-n-never heard you do anything else!" And a good many candidates for the pulpit would display the volubility without the genius of the author of 'Lay Sermons.' The special crotchets and vagaries of preachers, even with all the restraints of Church discipline, tend occasionally to anything but the edification of their hearers: and Mr Gladstone is surely right when he cautions us as to the risk of "allowing persons to assume the office of teachers in the Church, who are in no way subject to her laws and discipline."

A good deal might be done, no doubt, to make sermons more interesting, and therefore more useful, than they are. There is a natural but unfortunate tendency in the young preacher to follow in the old groove,—to repeat the stock phrases of the pulpit, and to fall into the conventional forms of thought and expression as well as the conventional manner of delivery. It is given to few men, in the clerical or the secular world, to be really original. The young divine feels himself only safe when he follows his recognised guides; and the habits of thought and expression formed on his first entrance upon his work are apt to cling to him ever afterwards. We want our sermons to be more modern in their cast of thought. They should suit this nineteenth century, as those of the great preachers of earlier times met the needs and awoke the feelings of men in their own day. The mass of sermons appeal to too narrow a circle of ideas. This fault is less general perhaps in the Church than in any of the Nonconformist pulpits, with some few very remarkable exceptions; and this because the spirit

of Church teaching is, on the whole, undeniably the most liberal and the least exclusive. But we very much doubt the wisdom of some advice which has lately been given from more than one quarter to the modern preacher, that he should handle freely the social and political questions of the day, especially those upon which men are strongly divided. No doubt the ecclesiastical orator who should discuss in his pulpit such themes as "the relations of labour and capital," "pauperism," political economy, and the like, would soon draw crowded congregations; but it would too often be at the great cost of being claimed as a leader by one party, and denounced, according to the colour of his views, as a communist or a reactionist by the other. There are those who would claim the Great Founder of Christianity as the first social reformer, even as there were those who would have made him a patriot king. Men of all shades of belief, or of no belief at all, have in all times been glad to claim religion as their ally. The wildest theories of communism, the most uncompromising tenets of passive obedience and the divine right of kings, have all been rested by their advocates upon warrant of Scripture. Such themes will be tempting enough to active minds. Robertson of Brighton—a name never to be mentioned without honour—fell into the snare. During some of the earlier years of his ministry there, he preached on subjects of the day, and won a class popularity at the expense of his general usefulness. When at a later date he preached his election sermon, in which he denounced not only bribery, but class interests and party politics, and declared it "better that a man should support the wrong cause conscientiously than the right one insincerely"*—even those who lis-

* Sermons, Fourth Series, p. 140.

tened with an incredulous smile must have felt that these were the words not of the orator, but of the evangelist. The preacher of the Gospel should stand in a higher and purer atmosphere, above the strifes of men. He deals with truths which are fixed and unalterable, not with the shifting opinions of the day or the generation,—honest and earnest enough, it may be, but in their very nature made up of right and wrong, of truth and falsehood. The social and political questions of the day are serious questions; but for those who look to the preacher to resolve them, he can but answer in the words of the Great Teacher, "Who made me a judge or a divider over you?"

It is confessed by most of the moderate advocates of liturgical reform, that doctrinal changes are demanded by comparatively few, and that there would be great risk of dismembering the Church in any attempt to make them. Such is the view of the "Church Reform Union," under whose auspices the late meeting in St James's Hall was held. But there is one formula in the Prayer-Book against the continued use of which earnest protests are made—not now for the first time—from very many both of the laity and clergy, and which is the only point involving any question of doctrine which the St James's Hall reformers put forward as a grievance to be redressed. It is the Creed called wrongly that of St Athanasius—or rather, certain clauses of the same, known as the "damnatory" clauses. The objection to their public use does not, in fact, involve so much a question of doctrine at all, as a question of charity. The words objected to are not really a portion of a creed, but an anathema. More than one of the speakers at the St James's meeting declared that, for himself, he accepted the whole

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statement in that Creed as to the doctrine of the Trinity, but what he objected to was the anathematising all who might not accept those particular definitions; and this would probably be the feeling of the majority of those who ask for its disuse, though the fact ought not to be concealed that there are those among the protesters who object to the dogma itself, and not merely to the condemnation pronounced against recusants. The discussion of any question of doctrine would be entirely out of place in these pages. But, assuming that the statements in this Creed are in themselves undeniable, and that such has always been and ought to be the teaching of the Catholic Church, the question still remains, whether it is necessary, and whether it is desirable, to call upon the congregation to pronounce publicly, in the strongest language, a condemnation of all who dissent, it may be, not from the general doctrine of that Creed, but from the particular terminology, technical and philosophical as language must be when it undertakes to define what, however understood, is a mystery. Various propositions have been made for the relief of tender consciences on the one side, with as little violence as possible to those on the other: to add, by way of rubric, an explanatory note, of which more than one form has been suggested, declaring that the anathema is to be understood only in a certain sense; to adopt a new and corrected translation, which it is believed would have much the same effect; to omit altogether the clauses in which it is contained; to use the Creed on Trinity Sunday only; to leave its use optional with the officiating minister. Of these, the last, which seems to many so easy, and requires only the little change of the word "*shall*" into "*may*" in the preceding rubric,

appears to us the most dangerous of all to the peace, and therefore to the best interests, of the Church. It would lead infallibly, as Canon Miller put it in his excellent speech, quoting the words of "a very straightforward layman, a man of vigorous mind," to a division, in the public opinion and estimation, "between the damning and the non-damning clergy." Of the other proposed remedies, a creed which requires omissions cannot be a catholic creed at all; and a note of explanation or modification (unless it is to be recited publicly with the creed) is what any individual member of the congregation can make mentally for himself, and much more to his own personal satisfaction. The proposal made by the reformers of St James's Hall is to discontinue the public recital of this Creed, but to retain it in the Prayer-Book as "a most venerable and valuable document." The one objection to this course is the shock which it seems clear would thus be given to men whom—to take Canon Liddon as a striking example—all parties agree to hold in the highest honour, and whose possible separation from the Church would be an irreparable evil. But surely these excellent men will consider that the Church of England, through its Convocation, has as much right to rearrange its services now as ever it had, and that the discontinuance in public worship—which by no means implies the rejection—of a metrical creed (which indeed may with almost as great propriety be called a doctrinal hymn), the whole tone of which is controversial, cannot be considered as unfaithfulness to a doctrine which is fully asserted in other parts of her services.

It is said that before Convocation can be held to express the deliberate voice of the Church of England, or claim any rightful authority for its decisions, it must reform its own constitution. As at present constituted, while the Upper House in each province consists of the bishops, the Lower contains, in the province of Canterbury, only forty-two representatives of the parochial clergy, and in that of York only thirty-one—the rest being either deans and archdeacons, who are *ex officio* members, or proctors chosen by the cathedral chapters. This is certainly true, and a scheme for a reformed representation is at this moment under consideration, by which the number of proctors for the parochial clergy would be more than doubled.* But most of those who look at the question impartially will be inclined to admit that the various shades of opinion are fairly enough represented under the present system; the dignified members, whose preponderating numbers are objected to, being men of more than the average ability, not confined to any particular school of thought—men who, if they were not deans or archdeacons or canons, would probably be chosen as representatives by the clergy of their own diocese, and who do express practically, though not professedly, the opinions of the wisest and most moderate of their body. Universal suffrage is not such an infallible recipe for getting the best men even in clerical elections. The question of lay representation is a very different and a very difficult question. Certainly it can no longer be said that the House of Commons is the lay convocation of the Church, and some substitute seems to be required. This, too, is a question which is

* It appears quite within the power of the archbishop, under the present constitution, to summon *the whole* of the clergy, which in fact the royal writ authorises him to do. The representation of the whole body by their "*procurators*" is a mere question of convenience.

under consideration in the present session. The Convocation of York are inclined to admit lay representatives to sit and vote jointly with their own clerical body. Canterbury prefers that the laity should form a third "House" of themselves, outside the present upper and lower clerical Houses, and that all matters "concerning faith, doctrine, and worship" decided in the clerical Synod should be afterwards submitted to the lay House for its assent. But meanwhile, it must be admitted that a really able and conscientious clergyman, such as we may fairly assume to be in most cases sent up as proctor for his diocese, does carry with him into Convocation, in wonderful measure, the assent and consent of a very large circle of laity. We have said here already that the interest felt by laymen generally on Church questions is far less than it should be; but the fact has at least one consolatory side from which it is possible to look at it,—that when the laity know and can trust their clergy, they do so trust them in a very remarkable degree, honourable alike to both parties. They think the clergy have studied such questions more carefully than they have themselves; and if they only give them credit in the first instance for honesty, they will give them full credit also, as they will their lawyer or their physician, for knowledge and judgment in their business. Amongst other projects of Church Reform, a Bill has been introduced into Parliament for the formation of "Parochial Councils," who are to advise and to a certain extent control the clergyman in matters of Church order and ritual—not of doctrine; and this subject has also engaged the attention of a Committee of Convocation. Whether such a scheme can ever be made to work so as not to do more

harm than good, by raising dissensions in some parishes, is matter of great doubt. The parish clergyman is certainly somewhat too much of an autocrat in such matters at present; but this kind of mild despotism may be but ill exchanged for a form of government which may keep a parish in a constant state of ecclesiastical ferment. It seems the more inexcusable in any parish priest to irritate the feeling of his parishioners against him by obstinately insisting upon carrying out his own opinions or tastes in matters which in themselves are confessedly indifferent; because it is clear to any one who knows the temper of the English laity, that a man of honesty, tact, and moderate forbearance, may carry them with him almost where he will.

The same objection—the risk of fomenting party feuds and parochial jealousies—may be urged against a Bill which has already passed its second reading in the House of Commons.* It proposes to give power to the bishop to license a chapel in any parish where the population exceeds 2000, without the consent of the incumbent. The Bill has a double aim. It would emancipate an "evangelical" minority from the bondage of a "ritualistic" rector, or *vice versa*, by enabling them to set up a minister of their own; and it would provide for the extension of church privileges and church accommodation in large parishes where the incumbent was unable to overtake his work, and yet jealous of any interference with his freehold. In this latter case the proposed measure would remedy a grievance existing happily in but few places, but, where it does exist, destructive of the interests of the Church. But in the former, it would have a dangerous tendency

* Mr Salt's "Public Worship Facilities" Bill.

to encourage those unhappy parochial feuds which are a scandal to the Church already, and would throw upon the diocesan the invidious choice of appearing either as the protector of the obstinate parson against "aggrieved parishioners," or as the ally of a discontented faction against the conscientious victim of their persecution. Once let a petition of the kind which is contemplated by this Bill be made to the bishop, and he will no longer be regarded as the moderator between the contending parties, but the partisan of the one or the other. At present the case of a clergyman and his parishioners is much that of husband and wife. They have their disagreements; but knowing that they *must* get on together, or else cause an unseemly disruption and scandal, they do get on together, in most cases, fairly well. But if we were to offer facilities for immediate divorce, parochial or domestic, upon every complaint of "incompatibility of temper," we should be tempting the rupture which all sensible people do their best to avoid.

Such are the principal movements in the direction of Church Reform, which have succeeded each other with a rapidity very startling to some conservative minds amongst the clergy. Proceeding in most cases from quarters quite independent of each other, their promoters may all alike be credited with the best intentions towards the Church. They have all the same tendency—

the widening rather than contracting the basis of the national Church, the recognition of variety in the views and opinions of its clergy, the fuller admission of the rights, the larger enlistment of the sympathies, of the laity. Some of them are obviously tentative and ill-considered, and are very unlikely to pass into law in their present shape. But, crude and impracticable as any of them may be, the fact of their being brought forward at all is a surer token of the vitality of the Church of England than the dead calm of indifferent acquiescence which has lasted so long. The bishops had warning given them long ago, from no friendly voice, to "set their house in order." The Church (and when we say the Church, we mean emphatically its laymen as well as its clergy) is taking up the warning in a different sense from what its enemies have either desired or expected. There are changes impending of one kind or other. If the Church of England, as an establishment, is to fall, it will not be from the attacks of the Nonconformists, strong and active as they are. It will be through the fault of two very different sections of its own members,—those who are too apathetic, or too confident in the vitality of its mere existence, to take any measures for its support—or those who are so jealous of change as to forget that change is one of the conditions of vigorous life.

THE MAID OF SKER.—PART X.

CHAPTER LIII.—BEATING UP FOR THE NAVY.

My other reason for setting down some short account of that evening was to give you a little peace, and sense of gratitude to the Lord, for our many quiet sunsets, and the tranquillity of our shores. It really seems as if no other land was blest as ours is, with quiet orderly folk inside it, and good rulers over it, and around it not too much of sun or moon, or anything, unless it may be fog sometimes. And this love of our country seems ever to be strongest, whether at departing for the wars with turbulent nations, or upon returning home, as soon as we have conquered them. But now for a long time, I shall have very little peace to dwell upon.

At Narnton Court I found no solace for my warmth of feeling. Polly had been sent out of the way, on purpose, because I was coming; which was a most unhandsome thing on the part of Mrs Cockhanterbury. For the very expectation which had buoyed me up at a flattish period, and induced me to do without three quids of cross-cut negrohead, was my simple and humble looking forward to my Polly. I knew that I was a fool, of course; but still I could not help it; and I had got on so well among young women always, that I found it very hard to miss the chance I cared for. I feared that my age was beginning to tell; for often, since I had been ashore, my rheumatics had come back again. Neither was that my only grief and source of trouble at this time; but many other matters quite as grave combined against me. Heavyside was not there to talk, and make me hug my singleness; nor even Jerry Toms, nor the cook, who used

to let me teach her. It was not that all these had left the place for any mischief. In an ancient household such a loss is not allowable. All meant to come back again, when it suited their opportunities, and each perceived that the house was sure to go to the dogs in the absence of themselves and one another. Heavyside had found Nanette (in spite of my best prognostics) overget her seventh occasion of producing small Crappos, and his natural disappointment with her led to such words that he shouldered his bundle and made off for Spithead, in company with Jerry, who was compelled to forsake his creditors. And as for the cook, I did hear, though unable to believe it, that she was in trouble about a young fellow scarcely worthy to turn her jack.

In other respects I found that nothing of much importance had occurred since I was there in the summer-time. Sir Philip continued to trust in the Lord, and the Squire to watch the sunsets; neither had the latter been persuaded to absolve his brother. The Captain had been at home one or two days, inquiring into my discovery of the buried dolls. He did not attach so much importance to this matter as his father had done, but said that it made a mysterious question even more mysterious. And failing, as a blunt sailor would, to make either head or tail of it, and being disgusted with his brother for refusing to see him, he vowed to remain in the house no longer, but set off for Pomeroy Castle again, where he had formed a close friendship with the eldest son of the owner. His lady-love, the fair Isabel, was not living

there now, but might very easily be met with; for on coming of age three years ago, she had taken possession of her domain, "Carey Park," a magnificent place adjoining the Pomeroy property. It was said that the Earl had done his best to catch the young heiress for his son, and therefore had made a pretext of the old charge against the Captain, for the purpose of putting a stop to communication with him. But his son, Lord Mohun, upon finding how the young lady's heart was settled, withdrew his suit (like a man of honour), and all the more promptly, perhaps, because he had made up his mind to another lady before Miss Carey came to them.

It was said that the Captain might now have persuaded the beautiful heiress to marry him, and finish their long affection, if he could have thoroughly made up his mind that honour would bear him out in it. For her confidence was so perfect in him, that she left it to his own judgment, herself perhaps longing to put an end to their wearisome uncertainty. Sir Philip heard of it, and came down, to implore them thus to settle themselves. And Captain Bampfylde was so hard set by the nature of the case, that he might have been enticed away from what his conscience told him. This was that the solemn oath which he had taken in the church, with Isabel beside him, to purge himself of all foul charges (ere he made another guilty, if himself were guilty), could not thus be laid aside without a loss of honour. Sir Philip would be the last man in the world to counsel dishonest actions; but being an old man, and reluctant that his race should all expire, he looked upon that sacrament as no more than a piece of sacrilege, or a hasty pledge of which the Lord would never take advantage.

Nobody knows what might have

happened with Captain Bampfylde so beset, and longing to think that he ought to act as everybody told him: but he begged for a night to think over it; and in the morning he received his appointment to the Bellona. Even Sir Philip could not deny that the hand and the will of the Almighty must herein be recognised. And there was a chance of a brush with Spain, about the Nootka Sound, just then; and if anything makes a sailor's fortune, it is a fight with these fine old Dona. A Frenchman is sure to be captured, but not half so sure as a Spaniard; and the hidalgos do turn out good gold, with good manners behind it. Many ships have I boarded, but with brightest alacrity always a good fat old Spaniard.

Therefore the Captain brushed away any little weakness, and set out for Spithead bravely, in a bachelor condition. And after trying to collect what news there was at Narnton, and finding that I must not think of meeting my dear Polly, I quietly drew my travelling-money, and set forth to join him.

Only every one will reproach me, and have right to do so, if I fail to tell the latest tidings of that Parson Chowne. People seemed to like this man, because they never could make him out, and nearly all the world is pleased to hear of the rest being vanquished. It seems that a wholly new bishop arose, by reason of the other dying, and this gentleman swore on the Bible to have things in order. When he heard of Chowne, and his high defiance of all former bishops, he said, "Fie, fie! this must not be; I will very soon put this to rights." To follow up this resolution he appointed Tiverton, and the old church of St Peter, for Chowne to bring his young people up to a noble confirmation; also for a visitation of the clergy all around; such as they have now and

then, to stop the spread of king's evil.

His holiness the Bishop was surprised to receive this answer: "My dear Lord,—My meet is at Calverly on the day you speak of. We always find a fox hard by; and if he should make for Stoodleigh coverts, I may come down the Bolham road in time to meet your Lordship. At any rate, I shall dine at 'The Angel,' somewhere between three and five o'clock, and hope to find you there, and have a pleasant evening with you.—Yours very truly, R. S. CHOWNE.

"*P.S.*—You need not bring cards."

The whole of this was written with Cumberland lead, on the back of a paper, showing how to treat hounds in distemper; and the Bishop was displeased about it, and declined his society; especially as he had invitation to the good Tidcombe Rectory. And there he was treated so hospitably by a very handsome family, that he put up his glass of a noble wine, and saw the sun set through it, and vowed that his *Magna Charta*, or *Habeas Corpus*, or *Writ of Error*—I never can remember which—but at any rate that his royal orders should fall out of his apron-pocket, if he failed to execute them.

In this state of mind he received a letter from Parson Chowne himself, full of respect, and most cleverly turned, as well as describing the Parson's grief at being unable to bring to his holiness any one fit to lay hands upon. The standard set before them had been (before laying on of hands) to say the Lord's Prayer backwards; and there was not one of them up to it. This angered the Bishop to such a degree, that he ordered out his heavy coach with the six long-tailed black horses, and the coachman with cocked-hat and flowing wig, and four great foot-

men shouldering blunderbusses; himself sate inside with his crozier and mitre, and lawn sleeves, and all the rest of it. Now this was just the very thing the refractory Parson expected; therefore he rode round overnight and bade every farmer in the neighbourhood send all his hands with pickaxes and shovels, by four o'clock the next morning: also he gathered all his own men there, as well as the unclad folk who were entirely at his orders. Then he sent for Parson Jack, as being the strongest man about there, and imparted his intention to him, and placed him over the workmen.

Early in the afternoon the Bishop's state-carriage was descried moving up the Tiverton highroad, with a noble and imposing aspect. Before he arrived at the cross-road leading off to Nympton Rectory, his Lordship was surprised to see a great collection of people standing on a hill above the road, and all saluting him with the deepest respect. "Not so bad after all," he exclaimed; "brother Chowne has brought his men into good order, which is the noblest use of the Church. Ah! they don't see a bishop every day, and they know when a thing is worth looking at, for their faces are black with astonishment. Holloa, Bob! what's that?"

"Up with the glass, your Lordship," the coachman shouted back; "or it will be all over with you. We are in a rare slough, and no mistake."

And so they were. His Lordship had no time to slam the windows up, before the coach lay wallowing in a bog of nighty blackness. In it poured, and filled the coach, and nearly smothered his Lordship, who was dragged out at last with the greatest trouble, as black as if he were dipped in pitch. For the Parson had done a most shameful

thing, and too bad for even him to think of. He had taken up his private road, and dug out the ground some six feet deep, and then (by means of carts and barrows) transferred to it the contents of a quagmire, which lay handy, and spread the surface again with road-dirt, so that it looked as sound as a rock. Having seen with a telescope from his window the grand success of his engineering, he sent down a groom in smart livery, to present his compliments to the traveller who had happened to lose his way, and fall into a moor-hole, and was there anything he could do to mitigate that misfortune! But the Bishop sputtered out through his chattering teeth that he hoped to hear no more of him, and that none but a Devonshire man was fit to oversee Devonshire parsons. And this made the fifth bishop conquered by Chowne.

To return to our noble selves—that is to say, to the better people dealt with in our history. At the close of this year 1790, to wit, upon Christmas-day of that excellent year of grace, no less than three of us dined together (of course, with a good many others also) in the Captain's cabin of the *Bellona*, 74-gun ship of the British Navy, carrying also six carronades. These three were, Captain Drake Bampfylde, of course, the Honourable Rodney Bluett, now our second lieutenant, and the Master of the ship, whose name was something like "David Llewellyn." This latter was now remarkable for the dignity of his appearance and the gravity of his deportment; and although he was only ranked after the youngest of the lieutenants, and just before chits of reefers (called by some people "midshipmen"), and though upon any but festive occasions you might not have spied him at the Captain's table, you could scarcely have found any officer more satisfied with his

position, and more capable of maintaining it.

We were cruising off the south coast of Ireland, under orders to search all ships that might be likely to carry arms; but as a frigate would have done for that service, as well as, or better than, a 74, we knew that our true commission was to shake together and fall into discipline, and bring other seamen into the same, if we could get any to join us. Having a light wind and plenty of sea-room, we resolved to enjoy ourselves that day; and a very delightful party it was, especially after I was called on to spin a few of the many true yarns which make me such a general favourite.

After filling our glasses and drinking the health of his Majesty, and of the Navy at large, and especially of our Captain, we began to talk of the state of affairs and the time at which the war might be expected to declare itself. That it must come to a great war with France, not even a fool could doubt, although he might desire to doubt it, ever since the destruction of the Bastille in July 1789. And throughout all the year and a half since that, a wild and desperate multitude had done nothing but abolish all the safeguards of their country, and every restraint upon the vilest rabble. Our wisest plan was to begin at once, before this cruel monster should learn the use of its fangs, and the strength of its spring; but, as usual, Great Britain was too slow to seize the cudgel, which might haply have saved a million lives. However, we were preparing quietly for the inevitable conflict, as even our presence that day in the cabin of the *Bellona* might indicate.

"Master, we are sadly short of hands," said Captain Bampfylde, addressing me; "I shall have a poor report to make, unless we do

something. Do you think that we could get on without you, if I sent you on a cruise for a week or so?"

"I think you might, sir," I answered humbly; "if it does not come on to blow, and if you keep well away from land. I have trained Mr Sebright with so much skill, that you may always rely upon him, except in any difficulty."

Nobly I spoke; and the Captain's reply was not very far behind me. "If we carried 750 men," he exclaimed, with generous candour, "we could not hope to have more than one Master David Llewellyn; so diffident, so truthful, so entirely free from jealousy. Gentlemen, is it not so?"

All the officers assented with a pleasant smile to me, and then to one another, so that I hardly knew what to say, except that I could not deserve it.

"Our tender the Sealark is to meet us in the Cove of Cork on New Year's Day," continued Captain Bampfylde; "and after shipping all our stores, she will be for a fortnight at my disposal. Now you know as well as I do, that our complement for war-time is 650 men and boys, and that our present strength is more than 200 short of that. War may be declared any day almost, and a pretty figure we should cut against a French liner of 80 guns. Therefore, unless the Sealark should bring us a very large draft, which I do not expect, my resolve is to man and victual her, for a fortnight's cruise, under some one who is a good hand at recruiting. Would you like the berth, Master Llewellyn?"

"Sir, I know not anything which I should like better."

Our Captain perceived that the junior lieutenants looked rather glum at being so passed over, from Master Rodney downwards; and though he had the perfect right to

appoint any officer he pleased, he knew the true wisdom of shunning offence, by giving some good reason. Therefore he went on again:—

"There is not one of us, I dare say, who would not enjoy this little change. But I think that Llewellyn is our man, simply for this reason. The part to be beaten up first is the Welsh coast, from St David's Head to Penarth. I have heard of many good seamen there, and especially at Llanelly. I think that none of our officers can speak Welsh, except Master David. Even you, Bluett, though coming from Wales, are not up to the lingo."

This settled it in the best-natured manner; and all congratulated me, and wished me good speed in getting hold of old salts, if possible, or else fresh young ones. Not to be too long about it, somewhere about Epiphany Day, in the year 1791, I stretched away for the coast of Wales, being in command of the Sealark, a rattling cutter of 100 tons, with two 6-pound bow-chasers, and a score of picked men under me. I have no time now to describe emotions, even of the loftiest order, such as patriotism, modesty, generosity, self-abasement, and many others which I indulged in, when I cast anchor off Porthcawl, and they thought that I meant to bombard them. I ordered a boat ashore at once, to reassure the natives, when I had given a waft of my flag, and fired a gun to salute it. But being now in such a position, and the parish to its utmost corners raving on the subject, ashore I durst not trust myself; because without rupture of ancient ties, and a low impression left behind, I could not have got aboard sober again. And after that, could I knock down any of my crew for being tipsy? Nevertheless, I had Bardie, and Bunny, and Mother Jones with her children, and Master

Berkrolles, and Charles Morgan, and Betsy Matthews, and Moxey Thomas, all brought in a boat to visit me, besides a few others who came without leave. They all seemed to be very well and happy, and I entertained them beautifully.

That same afternoon we made a hit enough to encourage anybody. We impressed not only my foe the tailor, but also Hezekiah! That is to say, it was not quite what might be called impressment; because, with no war raging yet, we could not resort to violence; but we made them both so entirely drunk, that we were compelled, for their own sake, to weigh anchor, while having their bodies on board. I had a stern fellow of noble mind to back me up at all hazard, and seeing what a sneak Hezekiah was, he gave him six dozen out of hand, with my official sanction. The Horologist to the Royal Family took his allotment worse than almost any man I ever saw; however, for old acquaintance' sake, I would not have him salted. In spite of this, the effect was such that it brought him round to the English Church, and cured him of all French doctrine. And as he gradually began to lose fat, and to dwell upon gunnery, we found his oiliness most useful to prevent corrosion. Having worked this coast to our utmost power, and gathered a good deal of human stuff (some useful and some useless), pretty near threescore in all, and put upon short rations, we thought that we might as well finish our job by slanting across to Devonshire. Because for the most part you there may find more body but less mind than ours, which is the proper state of things for the substance of our Navy. Therefore we drafted off to Cork all our noble Welshmen, and made sail for Devonshire.

Now, before telling what we did,

I really must guard against any nasty misconstruction. Whatever had been done to me on the part of Parson Chowne was by this time so wholly gone out of my heart, and mind, and everything any man can feel with, that nothing was further from my intention than to go into that matter again. I knew that in spite of all the deference paid me now on every side (and too much for my comfort), Chowne would turn me inside out, ten thousand times worse than Stew could. This I like to see done, when anything wrong can be found inside a man. But a thoroughly honest fellow should stick on his honesty, and refuse it.

So when Providence, in a dream, laid before me the great mercy, and I might say miracle, of impressing the naked people, and bringing them under our good chaplain, to be trained from the error of their ways and live, I felt a sort of delicacy as to trespassing thus upon Parson Chowne's old freehold.

These naked folk belonged to him, and though he did not cultivate them as another man might have done, it was not difficult to believe that he found fine qualities in them. And to take them from under his very nose might seem like a narrow vexation. However, times there are when duty overrides all delicacy; the Bellona was still short of her number by a hundred hands or more: and with this reflection I cast away all further hesitation.

We left the Sealark off Heddon's Mouth, a wild and desolate part of the coast, for my object was to pounce unawares on the Parson's savage colony. For what we were going to do was not altogether lawful just at present, although it very soon would be. My force consisted of no less than fifteen jolly well-seasoned tars, all thoroughly armed, all up for a spree, and ready to do

any mortal thing at a word or a signal from me. If we could only surprise the wild men, I had no fear as to our retreat, because the feeling of the country would be strongly in our favour as the abaters of a nuisance long pronounced unbearable.

For five or it may have been six leagues we marched across the moors as straight as possible by compass, except when a quagmire or a ridge of rugged stone prevented us. We forded several beautiful streams of the brightest crystal water, so full of trout that I longed to have a turn at my old calling; and we came in view of Nympton steeple just as the sun was setting. I remembered the lie of the land quite well, ever since that night when the fire happened; so I halted my men in a little wood, and left them to eat their suppers, while I slung my spy-glass and proceeded to reconnoitre the enemy. Lying flat upon the crest of a hummocky ridge of moorland, I brought my glass to bear through the heather first upon the great Parson's house, which stood on a hill to the left of me, and then on the barbarous settlement. The Rectory looked as snug and quiet as the house of the very best man could be; with a deal more of comfort than most of these contrive to gather around them. The dens of the tribe that objected to raiment were quite out of sight from his windows; nor were they allowed to present themselves to Mrs Chowne, unless she had done anything to vex him. Shaping my glass upon these wretches, I saw that they were in high festival. Of course I could not tell the reason, but it turned out afterwards that the Parson's hounds were off their feed through a sudden attack of distemper, and therefore a cartload of carrion had been taken down to the settlement. It was lucky that I knew it not, for

I doubt whether we should have dared to invade their burrows at such a period.

However, I thought that nothing could be more suitable for our enterprise. Of course they would all overgorge themselves, and then their habit of drinking water, which alone would establish their barbarism, was sure to throw them into deep untroubled sleep till sunrise. As soon as one could strike a line from the pointers to the Pole-star (which is a crooked one, by the by), and as soon as it was dark enough for a man to count the Pleiads, I called my men with a long low whistle, and advanced in double file. The savages lay as deeply sleeping as if their consciences were perfect, whereas they could have had none at all. We entered their principal cuddy, or shanty, or shieling, or wigwam, or what you will (for it was none of these exactly, but a mixture of them all), and to our surprise not one awoke, or was civilised enough to snore. Higgledy-piggledy they lay in troughs scooped out of the side of the hill, or made by themselves, of clay and straw (called "cob," I believe, in Devonshire), with some rotten thatch above them, and the sides of their den made of brushwood. Some of the elders had sheepskins over them, but the greater part trusted to one another for warmth, and to their hairiness.

All this we saw by a blue-light which I ordered to be kindled—for at first it was as dark as pitch—and a stranger or a sadder sight has rarely been seen in England. Poor creatures! they were all so cowed by the brilliant light and the armed men standing in their filthy hovel, that they offered no resistance, but stared at us in a piteous manner, as if we were come to kill them. Escape was impossible, save for the children, and most of them thought (as we found out afterwards) that

Chowne was tired of them and had ordered their destruction.

"Choose all the males from ten years to thirty," I shouted to my men, who were almost as scared as the savages: "don't touch the females, or I'll cut you down. Set another blue-light burning: we don't want any cripples."

Not to be too long with it, I only found three men worth impressing; the others were so badly built, or even actually deformed, and of appearance so repulsive that we could not bear to think of turning them into messmates.

"Now for the boys!" I cried; "we want boys even more than men almost;" but I found that all the children save one had slipped through the sailors' legs adroitly, while we were dealing with the men. We could not have caught them in the dark; and more than this, the best-sized of them had popped, like snakes, into burrow-holes, or like a fox into his earth.

But the one who stood his ground, and faced us, was a noble-looking boy, in spite of dirt and nakedness, with long thick tangles of golden hair, and a forehead like a man's almost. He looked up at me in a bold steady manner, wholly unlike their savage stare, and it struck me that here was the little fellow whom I had saved eight or nine years ago from the horse of Parson Jack. But though he appeared to be twelve years old, I could not make out what he said, except "Yes, yes;" and "me come with oo." Such was his state of education!

I hoisted him on a strong man's back, for the long march had made me feel my years, and perceiving no call to molest the residue, or injure their home—such as it was—we simply handcuffed the three best fellows, and borrowed three pig-whips of their own (made right down ingeniously) so as to drive

them to Heddon's Mouth. We durst not halt for a rest until there were three leagues between us and Nympton Moor; then hurrying on at the break of day, we found the Sealark at anchor; and she sent us a boat, at our signal.

Scarcely were we on board of the boat, and pushing off with our capture, when the clash of a horse's hoofs upon rock rang through the murmuring of the waves. We turned and gazed with one accord, for the boat lay broadside on to shore, through the kicking of the naked men when they felt salt water under them, and our quitting good stroke to attend to them. At furious speed a horseman dashed out of the craggy glen, and leaped the pool where the brook is barred up and vanishes. Down the shingle, and shelves of wrack, he drove his horse into the sea, until there was no firmness under him. He almost laid hold of our boat—not quite; for I struck with an oar at the horse, and scared him, shouting to all of my crew to pull.

Finding himself just a little too late, Chowne gave a turn to his horse's head, and the lather and foam of the spirited animal made a white curdle in the calm blue sea. The horse sprang gladly up the shingle crest—for the shore is very steep there—and he shook himself and scattered brine; and there were three other horses behind him. On one of these sat Parson Jack, and two huntsmen on the other twain, and the faces of these were as red as fire with hurry and indignation.

Only Chowne's wicked face was white, and settled with calm fury; and his style of address to us, just as if we were nothing but dogs of his kennel.

"Ho, you scoundrels!" he shouted out; "hold oars, and let me parley you."

At this I made a signal to my crew to slack from rowing; and I stood up in the boat, and said, "What can we do for your Reverence?"

"Nothing for me, rogues; but much for yourselves. I will give you five pounds for that child in the stern. I want him for knife-cleaning."

"Would your Worship think fifty too much for him? We put him at fifty, your Worship."

"Fifty, you robbers! Well, then, fifty. Ten times his value to any one. But I have a fancy for him."

"Would your Worship mind say-

ing five hundred down? Look at his hair; he is worth it." For we had washed him in the brook; and his hair in drying was full of gold.

"Who are you?" he shouted, controlling himself, as his habit was, when outbreak became useless. For the dignity of my demeanour, and the nobility of my uniform, also the snowiness of my hair, combined to defeat the unerring quickness of his rapid and yet cold eyes. And so I replied, with an elegant bow—

"Your Reverence, it so happens that my name is 'Old Davy Llewellyn.'"

CHAPTER LIV.—TAMING OF THE SAVAGES.

After a most successful cruise, we returned to our Bellona, and were received as behoves success, with ever so many rounds of cheers. It was true that we had sent before us, and now brought in, an awkward lot; but it is beautiful to see how in a large ship's company, and under a good commander, mere coaster fellows become true seamen, and even land-lubbers learn how to walk. Captain Drake Bampfylde did me the honour of asking my advice, as soon as his own opinion was settled; and I said no more than "Bay of Biscay," which was his own opinion. Here the very utmost of a noble sea awaited us, and none of our landsmen had any heart for fat, or even for lean stuff. We let them go on for a day, perpetually groaning, and after that we provided for each a gallon of salt water, and gave it them through the ship's trumpet, until they entirely ceased from noise.

These prudent measures brought them into such a wholesome state of mind, that really a child might lead them, as by one of the prophets mentioned, when I read my Bible. All of our new hands, I mean, ex-

cept Hezekiah, and the three wild men.

Unfortunate Master Perkins could not enter into the spirit of our exertions for his benefit; because his mind was unsettled with knowing the hardship both of his back and front. For his back was covered with raw places sitting amiss to the fit of his clothes, while the forward part of his body became too hollow to yield him comfort. But, strange to say, his wrath was kindled not against us for these misfortunes, but against his wife Hepzibah, because she had not predicted them. And for the greater part of a week, the poor fellow lay in a perfect craze upon the orlop-deck, while the ship was rolling heavily. Nothing could persuade him but that he was the prophet Jonah in the belly of the whale, and he took the stowage of our cables for the whale's intestines. You could hear him even from the main-deck screaming at the top of his voice, "Wallow not, O whale! O whale! Lord, Thy servant repenteth, only let not this whale wallow so." So that in spite of all his tricks, hypocrisy, pride, and glut-

tony, I could not help taking compassion upon him, and having a hammock rigged tenderly for him, so that his empty and helpless body fell into a deep sleep as long as the prophet himself could have had it. For I never could show myself at Bridgend, if through my means Hezekiah found the sea his churchyard. On the other hand, the three wild men took their visitation from a wholly different point of view. They had never heard either of God or the devil, and could not believe themselves even worth the interference of either Power. For they did not believe that their souls were immortal (as I suppose they must have been), nor were they even aware of possessing anything more than a body apiece. My own idea of treatment was, that to bring them into self-respect, we should flog the whole three very soundly, and handsomely pickle them afterwards: nor could I see any finer method of curing them of their hairiness. But Captain Bampfylde, who showed the strangest interest in these savages, would on no account have them flogged until they gave occasion. He said that their ideas of justice might be thrown into a crooked line, if the cat-and-nine-tails were promiscuously administered. Whereas I knew that the only way to make a man dwell upon justice is to give him a taste of the opposite. He values the right after this, because he thinks there is none of it left upon earth.

So for the present these three "Jack Cannibals," as our tars entitled them, sate apart and messed apart—and a precious mess it was of it. They soon got over the "Marly Mary," as the Crappos call it; and we taught them how to chew tobacco, which they did, and swallowed it. Only their fear of the waves was such that they could not look over the side of the ship, or

even out of a porthole. After a few days we fell in with pelting showers of hail and sleet, with a bitter gale from the north-north-west. I saw the beauty of this occasion to show mankind their need of clothes; therefore I roused up these three poor fellows, and had them thrown into a salting-tub full of ice-cold water. This made their teeth chatter bravely, and then we started them up the rigging, with a taste of rope's-end after them. They ran up the ratlines faster than even our very best hands could follow them, because of the power still left in their feet, through never having owned a shoemaker; but in the maintop they pulled up, and the wind went shivering through them.

Meanwhile I was sedately mounting (as my rank required now) with a very old pilot's coat, well worn out, hanging over my left arm.

"Here, Jack!" I cried to the biggest one; "take this, and throw it over you, to keep your poor bones warm."

The sheaves of the blocks were white with snow (which they always seem to be first to take), and so were the cleats and the weather side of topmast and top-gallant-mast. When you see this, you may make up your mind to have every rope frosted ere morning. Therefore Jack Cannibal looked at the coat, and around it, as a monkey does.

"Put it on," I cried; "poor fellow! put it on to cover you."

He nodded and laughed, as if I were making some joke which he ought to understand, and then he threw the warm coat round his body (now quite blue from cold), but without any perception of sleeves, or skirts, or anything else, except, as it were, like a bit of thatching. And after that he helped us to civilise the rest; so that in course of time we had them in decency far superior to the average show of Scotchmen.

And in about the same course of time, Cannibal Jack, I do assure you, became a very good seaman, and a wonderfully honest fellow, without any lies in him. And yet he said things better than the finest lies that could be told, all coming out of his oddness, and his manner of taking tameness. And if a roaring sound of laughter came to the ears of an officer (such as never could be allowed in the discipline of war-time), the officer always lifted lip, to have a smile accordingly, and said to himself, "I should like to know what Cannibal Jack has said to them."

The two other naked ones, Dick and Joe—as we christened them out of a bucket of tar, without meaning any harm to them—never could be entirely cured of their hereditary shortcomings. We taught them at last to wear clothes, by keeping a sharp leather strap always handy, against which their only protection was a good watch-coat, or a piece of sail-cloth; so that after a great deal of pleasantry, we set the ship-tailor to work for them. But no possible amount of strap, nor even cat-and-nine-tails administered by our boat-swain's mate (a most noble hand at wielding it), could prevail upon them to abandon their desire for the property of their messmates. They even had the arrogance, as their English grew more fluent, to attempt to reason it out with us.

"Father David," said Cannibal Dick, for they had agreed that now I was their patron, even as Chowne had been; "you take the Crappo ship, the enemy you call it, and then you leave them all their goods, not touch one of anything, and hand back the ship to him."

"Dick, none but a savage would talk such rubbish. We keep the ship, and all it holds, and put the men in prison."

"There for you now, there for

you! And you beat us because we take not a great ship, but some little thing lying about in a ship, from our enemies."

"Will you never see things aright, Dick? We are not your enemies, we are your friends; and to steal things from us is robbery."

"You call it friends to steal us from our place, and people, and warm dry sands, and put us on this strange great wetness, where no mushrooms grow, and all we try to eat goes into it. And then you beat us, and drive us up trees such as we never saw before, and force us to hide in these dreadful things!"

Here he pointed to his breeches with a gaze of such hopeless misery, that I felt it would be an unkind thing to press him with further argument. However, the boy was enough to make up for a far worse lot than these were. We soaped him most powerfully, to begin with, even up to the skin of his eyelids, and he made no more objection than a Christian child might have offered. And after we had scraped him dry with the rough side of a spencer, he came out bright, I do assure you, and was such a model figure that we said to one another that he had some right to go naked. For his skin was now as fair and soft as the opening out of a water-lily, while his golden curls spread out, like flowers of the frogbit. Also his shoulders so nicely turned, and the slope of his sides so clever, with arms and legs of such elegant mould, being thick and thin in the proper places, and as straight as a well-grown parsnip; then, again, his ankles clear, and feet of a character never beheld after any shoemaking.

Our common fellows made so much of this superior little chap, that I was compelled to interfere, and show my resolution: and this required to be done with some small sense of how to do it; otherwise

the boy might take the turn of sour grapes with them, and be bullied even more than he had been petted thitherto. Moreover, all the other boys in the ship were longing to fight with him, which (as he was the smallest of all, and not brought up in a Christian manner) would have afforded him no fair play for his nice short nose, or his soft blue eyes. The little dear was as brave as a lion, and ready to fight any one of them; and he used to stand up to my elbow, suing for permission. And now he began to talk so well, that it was very hard upon him not to be allowed to fight a bit; according to the natural issue of all honest converse. However, I would not be persuaded, loving his pretty face as I did; and I fear that he had unhappy times, through the wickedness of the other boys. Having a stronger sense of mistake than afforded me any happiness—in the thick of my rank and comforts—I could not find any ease until everything, looked at anyhow, and from all bearings contemplated, lay before our Captain. He thought, enough to look wise; and then, he said that really I was fit to see to such little things myself. He had heard of a small boy covered over with a great deal of yellow hair; this should have been fetched off long ago; and what was the barber kept for! Thus it always does befall me, to be thrown back, without guidance, on my own resources. And even Lieutenant Bluett, with whom I next went to hold counsel, was more inclined to stretch and gape, after a heavy spell on deck, than to bring his mind to bear upon this child's adventures.

"Send the poor little beggar in," he said, "and let me look at him, if I can keep my eyes open. Llewellyn, you always did love savages."

"Lieutenant, you would not like me to account you in the number."

"Davy, you might fairly do it, when I come off deck, like this. Send him in, ere I snooze, old fellow."

This I did; and when the boy entered, shyly putting one hand to his forelocks (as I had instructed him), a beam of the newly-risen sun broke in through a bull's eye, and made a golden frame for him. In the middle of this he looked so innocent and so comely, and at the same time so well bred, that Master Rodney's sleepy eyes fell open with wonder at him. This was my doing, of course, entirely. "Soap and discipline" is my signal to the next generation; and nothing else can counteract all the heresies around us. Therefore this little boy's cheeks were brighter than any rose, from towelling; and his beautiful eyes without speck of dirt; and the top of his head as sweet and curly as a feathering hyacinth.

When I perceive that I have had the luck to make an impression, my rule is to say nothing at all, but appear to be unaware of it. This rule is founded on common-sense; and it took me so long to find it out, that it ought to be worth something. Otherwise, what offence one gives! And not only that, but consider how seldom the man who succeeds deserves it. Any modest man, like me, upon any moderate success, is bound to examine himself, and feel less confidence than he used to have. His success is enough to prove, according to the ways of the world, that he never can have deserved it.

This remembrance led me now to abstain from even patting "Harry" (as we had named this little fellow) on his golden head at all, lest I should manifest undue pride in a creature of my creation. For such he was, beyond all mistake; and it would have given me pleasure to back him for a crown against any

boy in our fleet, or any three in the whole French navy; taking age, of course, and size, into consideration.

"What a fine little fellow!" said Rodney Bluett; "why, he ought to be a midshipman. I had no idea your savages could turn out such young ones. I must see what I can do for him, Davy. Only I can't think of anything now."

Perceiving that I was likely to do more harm than good by pressing the matter just then, I took little Harry away with me, and found him quite full of the young lieutenant's brave appearance and kindly smile. In a word, they were pleased with one another so heartily, and so lastingly, that it was the luckiest

day, perhaps, of poor little Harry's unlucky career, when I first commended him to the notice of the Honourable Rodney.

For this latter was now not only a general favourite in the ship, but also a great power; being our second luff, and twice as active as our first was. He took the boy under his special care, and taught him all sorts of ennobling things—how to read, and write, and spell, and clean boots, and wait at breakfast. So that I felt many qualms sometimes, quite apart from all narrow methods of regarding anything, and springing from the simple fear that the child might be spoiled for his station in life, and fail to become a good seaman.

CHAPTER LV.—UPON FOREIGN SERVICE.

At length, when all sailors' hearts were sick with vain hopes of some enterprise, France did a truly bold thing by declaring war against Great Britain. Those people before this had given occasion for the strongest scandal, by taking their King and Queen in a dastardly manner, and cutting their heads off. Indignation and hot hatred ran throughout England and Wales, at the news; but our Government did no more than politely request that the London agent of these cut-throats should withdraw.

Nevertheless I cannot be wrong—as my pension comes from Government—in saying that to my mind the British Government, at this noble crisis, behaved in a most forbearing, prudent, Christian, generous, glorious, and magnanimous manner. They waited for war to be proclaimed by France, before they accepted it. And then they proved themselves as wholly unready as they ought to be. What finer state of feeling can be shown by any country!

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It must have been either the end of February, or the early part of March, in the year of grace 1793, when we heard of this grand and momentous affair. And I remember the date by this, that the onions were sprouted, and we were compelled to make shift with shallots. For calling at Falmouth to victual a little, we sent three boats ashore, and I of course was in command of one. And though we spread abroad and ransacked all the Cornish gardeners' hoards, and gave them a taste of boat-hooks, because they had no proper things, not an onion could we find, except with a crooked thumb to it. Nor were the young ones yet fit to pull; and this fixes the date to a week or so.

And now we found that the whole of us were to be turned over, while the *Bellona* was refitting, to the 74-gun ship *Defence*, with orders for the West Indies at once—as was generally believed—to protect our shipping and commerce there.

For although the war had been

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so very long looked forward to, our Government was not ready yet, but had to send squadrons right and left, to see to our foreign interests; while Portsmouth, Chatham, and even London, had very few ships to defend them. Our charity never begins at home; as poor Bardie's did in her copy-book. However, it chanced to turn out all right, because the other side was quite as much abroad as we were.

Some of our men were inclined to grumble, at having barely a spree ashore, when they longed for a turn at home again. But the Admiralty settled that, by not paying their back-wages; which is the surest way of all for keeping a fellow well up to his work. His temptation for running is gone, because he has no cash to run with; neither do his people want him while in that condition. This he knows well, and it makes him think; and nine times out of ten he resolves to double what is due to him, and really pocket it when again due, and almost be admired by his own wife.

Therefore most part of us tumbled over from the Bellona into the Defence, after some liberty ashore—which, for a godly man like me, was nothing more than a trial. Captain Drake Bampfylde worked harder than even Parson Chowne's horses were said to do; and as for me—but I will not say, for it now becomes unbecoming. Enough that the Defence cleared outward of the No-man buoy, the very day three weeks from the date of the Bellona standing inwards. We had the wind at E.N.E., as it always is in spring-time.

Now it may seem out of place, and even very rude on my part; but I could not altogether help a strong desire to know how our Captain this time managed in the matter of the female sex. I had my own feelings towards poor young

Polly, and a hankering to let her see me (which, however, must not now be gratified on either side), and of course a man feels, when this is the case, that another man must be like him. However, the rules of the service forbade me to put any questions on private affairs to an officer thus set over me; and as for observing him, that was below me, even if time had availed for it. Heavieside also had shown such ill feeling and even downright ingratitude towards me, simply because my position and rank had compelled me to teach him his distance, which he was somehow too stupid to learn (especially since his rash elevation, and appointment as our chief boatswain, which made it the more incumbent upon me to preserve a firm attitude); this fellow, I say, was so utterly wanting in that deference which the Master of a line-of-battle ship not only has a right to expect, but is even bound to exact, that I could not now approach him with inquiries about our Captain. And this became tenfold more painful, as soon as I saw that he knew something.

What French sailors could have a chance with a fleet under Sir John Jervis? I cannot tell how many islands we took, for we could not stop to count them. We caught just the tail of the hurricane of the 12th and 13th of August, which ever will be remembered as the most terrible ever known. None of us had the luck to see the pine bulk-head blown through the palm-tree, or the whole of a sugar-estate set down on the other side of the mountain; but a sailor asks credit for his stories, because he has given it: and otherwise no tales can go on.

I need not dwell on our victories here, except for the sake of Harry Savage, as we had dubbed the poor Nympton boy, for want of legitimate surname. In one little skir-

mish ashore somewhere, I think in San Domingo, this little fellow, by genuine courage and unusual nimbleness, saved the life of his friend and protector, our Lieutenant Bluett. For while the Lieutenant was engaged, sword to sword, with one vile republican, another of yet more rampant nature made at him, as it were flankwise, and must have given him a bitter stab, if Harry had not with a sudden jump grappled the rogue by the leg so tightly, that down he came on his face with a curse, so far as their language enables them. And we were so enraged, I assure you, at the duplicity of this fellow, that we borrowed a dirk from a little midddy, and gave it to Harry to stick him with. But this our young savage refused to do, and turned quite pale at the thought of it, so that we placed that Equality man at the mercy of the French Royalists, who were acting with us at that period : and these made very short work with him, as justice demanded with a ringleader of pestilential principles.

Also, in a manner which true modesty forbids to dwell upon—because neither of us had clothes on—I saved the life, before very long, of our new boatswain Heaviside. This worthy fellow was swimming along in his usual independent style, after kicking his good wife's shackles off, when I having taken the inside of him, as his superior officer, discovered a shark of unusual size desirous to swallow our boatswain. That this should never come to pass was my resolve immediately, although I could not quite see how to be in time to stop it. For Heaviside, with his usual conceit, and desire to show himself off, was floating on his back, with arms laid square, and beard on breast, and legs spread out like rolling-pins. And the shark at twenty knots an hour split the blue water towards him.

Any man but myself would have given him over, or left all the rest to help him, especially after his utterly republican want of deference. To me, however, such want of sympathy was almost impossible, so that I swam with all speed to Heaviside, where he lay floating grandly.

"Look there!" I shouted; "all up with you, Ben, unless you capitulate." And with these words, I pointed out the fin of the shark advancing. Royal sharks we always called them, being the largest sharks in the world, in and around Port Royal. Heaviside had his fat legs foremost, and the royal shark stopped to look at them.

"Will you, or will you not?" I asked, while preserving with some difficulty a proper position behind him—for even a royal shark could have wanted nothing more after Heaviside.

"Oh, Davy, Davy, I will," he answered; "only, only save me."

The look which he gave was now enough to make me sink small questions, especially as the poor fellow managed, being a first-rate swimmer, to offer me almost foremost to the jaws of the shark just opening. Therefore, as this latter creature rolled on his side to make at us, what did I do but a thing which none except a great fisherman could have done? To wit, I plucked from its strings the boatswain's heavy periwig (which had often vexed me, on account of its pretension), and clapping it on a piece of sugar-cane, which lay floating handy, down the wide jaws of the shark I thrust it, to improve his appetite.

Faithless people may doubt my word, when solemnly I declare to them that this great monster of the waters coughed and sneezed like a Christian. And we found him rolling dead the next morning, with this obstruction in his throat. Thus by much caution and presence of

mind, I saved our boatswain not only from the jaws of a shark, but from a far more fatal error, arrogance and downright contumacy, which had made him refuse to touch his hat to his superior officer. Now I need not have mentioned this little affair, except that it bears upon my story, inasmuch as it reconciled Master and boatswain, and enabled them both to work together for the benefit of their Captain. Among poor Heaviside's many weak qualities, one of the most conspicuous was a resolute curiosity. This compelled him to open a great part of the breadth of his nature to the legitimate, or otherwise, affairs of his fellow-creatures.

And being an orthodox champion of wedlock (from the moment he left his wife and children, without any power to draw on him), he helped all the rest of the world in this way, as a host recommends his hot pickles.

Therefore he had been chosen, by very bad taste upon somebody's part, and an utter forgetfulness of me, to be up at our Captain's snap of a wedding, and to say "Amen" to it. What could be worse than a huddle of this kind, and a broad scattering afterwards? If they had only invited me, both sense and honesty would have been there; as well as a man not to be upset by things, however female.

That was their own concern, of course; and it misbecame me to think of it; and I saw, upon further consideration, that my sturdy honesty might not quite have suited them. For women are able, with the help of men, to work themselves up to anything. You may call them the shot, and men the powder; or you may take quite another view, and regard them as the powder, with a superior man at the touch-hole. Anyhow, off they go; and who shall ask the reason?

For from what Heaviside told me, it seems that the Captain and his fair Isabel, before our present cruise began, had resolved that no one should ever be able legally to sever them. But one special term of the compact was that the outer world should have no acquaintance with things that happened between them. In other words, that they should leave their excellent friends and relatives all in the dark about this matter, as well as save the poor Captain's oath, by quitting each other immediately. It is to the utmost extent beyond my own experience to deny, that this is the wisest of all arrangements (if there can be anything wise) after the deed of wedlock; for what can equal severance in the saving of disagreement? However, they had not the wisdom as yet to look at it in this light, and the one wept, and the other sighed, when they parted at the churchyard gate; for the Defence must sail at 1 P.M. The lady had been content to come and dwell in a very dirty village of the name of Gosport, so that the licence might be forthcoming from proper people, when paid for. Because, of course, in her own county, nothing could have been done without ten thousand people to talk of it. And thus they were spliced, without hoisting flag; for ever spliced, both in soul, and in law (which takes the lead of the other one), and yet in body severed always, till there should come fair repute.

A common man of my rank in life, and having no more than common-sense, must often find himself all abroad with wonder about his superiors. They seem to look at things as if everything and every person were looking back at them again, instead of trusting to the Lord to oversee the whole of it. If I had been of the proper age, and a lovely rich maid in love with

me, would I have stopped even twice to think what the world might say about us? Heaviside's opinion was that the lady wished to hide nothing whatever, but proclaim before all people where and when, and whom she wedded, and how proud she was of him. But the Captain, in his kind regard and tenderness for her feelings, durst not expose her to the pain and sense of wrong which might ensue upon his name coming forward thus, with the country thinking as it did, and himself not there to vindicate. And of course he knew with what vigour and skill vile Parson Chowne would set to at once to blacken his character and to make his bride a most unhappy one. Therefore Sir Philip Bampfylde and the ancient Earl of Pomeroy were the only persons present of their rank and kindred;

and both of these confessed the wisdom of the Captain's arguments.

Now on the 30th of April 1794, at about the hour of sundown, our anchor was scarcely beginning to bite in Cawsand Bay, when the barge of the old Port-Admiral was alongside of us. We had long been foregathering what we would do as soon as we got ashore again; but now we could only shake heads and fear that the whole would be disappointment. And thus it proved, and even worse for many of our company, inasmuch as our orders were to make sail at once for St Helena, and there to join the Channel fleet under Admiral Lord Howe. Therefore we carried on again with a gale from south-west to favour us, and on the 1st of May we brought up in the midst of a large society.

CHAPTER LVI.—EXILES OF SOCIETY.

A finer sight was never seen than we had now around us; for all the convoy was come together, as well as the British fleet empowered to protect them. I stood in our fore-top and counted 152 large sail, nearly 50 of which were men-of-war, and all the rest goodly merchantmen. A sight like this not only strengthens a Briton's faith in Providence, but puts him into a quiet pride concerning his King and country.

We had scarcely swung to our moorings ere we had signal from the Admiral, "Not a man to be allowed ashore. Water and victual all night, and be ready to weigh again at day-break." Of course we did so, though a hard thing upon us; and new hands desired to grumble, until Captain Bampfylde rigged the gratings. Heaviside now was known to have such a swing of arm, with a flick to it, never being satisfied with his

mate's administration, that never a man of patriotic sentiments encroached on him. We all determined to sail once more, and let the French see what our nature was (although they might hope to find it spoiled, by our being away from home so much); especially when we heard that they had 350 sail or more of merchantmen coming home, all very rich, and fattened up for capture. What we wanted, therefore, was to see our own good traders free from any chance of piracy, and at the same time to stop those French from wicked importations. If in both points we might succeed, and give battle afterwards, our gratitude to the Lord would almost equal our own glory. And we heard that the mob in Paris would starve, failing of all this American fleet.

On the 2d of May the wind fetched back to its proper place at that time of year, north-north-east,

with snow-clouds always ready to endorse it; and thus we slipped from our moorings and went quietly down Channel. Concerning the rest, we have no cause to plead for man's indulgence. The Lord continued to baffle us, and would not give us any help to close quarters with the enemy. We fought three days of rolling battle, ending on the 1st of June, after two days of fog interrupting, and not a breath of sleep four nights. Every one says that we fought very well, having everything so much against us, and the French fleet far superior, carrying also a representative of the human race, large and fat and fluent, of the name of John Bone Andrews, who wrote a noble account of this action, although before it began his feelings led him to seek security in a hole far below the water-line.

But one of the strangest things ever seen, and thoroughly worth considering, was the behaviour of our two savages under heavy fire. Two, I say, although we had three, because Cannibal Jack behaved most steadily, and like a thorough Christian. But the two others most strongly proved their want of civilisation and gross ignorance of war, inasmuch as no sooner did they see the opening of bloodshed round them, than mad they became—as mad, I assure you, as any March hares, the brace of them. In the thick of our combat with the Towerful, up and down the deck these fellows danced in the most conspicuous places, as if inviting every shot, and cracking their knuckles and jabbering. I was for lashing them to the mainmast, but Captain Bampfylde would not allow it; he said that their spirited conduct might encourage and cheer the rest of us. And indeed it was strange to see how the shot flew around without striking them.

Now these poor fellows showed so much attachment and strong con-

fidence towards me, that when we cast anchor in Plymouth Sound (being detached for refitment there, together with eight other ships of the line), I took it entirely upon myself to see them safe home, and to answer for them. Our ship had been knocked about so much, that she needed a thorough good overhauling, and many of us had a month's leave of absence, while carpenters, caulkers, and riggers were working. And these three savages outwent all of us in longing to see their homes again. So it struck me that I might both satisfy them and also gratify myself a little, by taking them under my escort as far as their native mud-holes, and then for a week perhaps enjoying good young Polly's society. Captain Bampfylde not only agreed to this, but said that he should not care twopence if he never saw two of their number again. He meant, of course, Dick and Joe, whose habits of larceny never could be thrashed out; whereas Cannibal Jack was now become as honest a hand as myself almost, and a valuable foretopman. Having pledged my word to bring this one back safe, and the others as well (if they chose to come), I set forth afoot for a cruise across Devon, than which, in the summer, with plenty of money, what can be more delightful? I would gladly have taken young Harry Savage, now a fine lad of fifteen years, so far as one might guess it; but Jack declared that he must not come, for some reason not to be told to me.

Now it was the flush of summer, very nearly twelve years from the time I first began with. Sunny hedges spread their overlap of roses over us, while the glad leaves danced in time with light and shade to foster them. Every bank of every lane was held at home with flowers, nourished by some fitting rill that

made a tinkle for them. And through every gate almost, whenever there was a man to look, the spread of feathered grasses ran, like water with the wind on it.

Even a sailor may see such things, and his heart rejoice and be glad in them, and his perilous life for a while have rest without any thought of anything. Be that so, neither Dick nor Joe ever made glance at anything except the hen-roosts near the road, or the haunt of a young rabbit in the hedge, or the nesting of a partridge. I kept the poor fellows from doing harm, by precept and example too; yet we had a roast fowl every night, except when it was a boiled one. And finding myself in my sixty-fourth year, what could I do but put up with it?

It must be threescore miles, I think, even according to the shortest cut, from Plymouth to Nympton-on-the-Moors, and we wandered out of the way, of course, especially after guinea-fowls, which are most deluding creatures, but roast even better than their eggs boil. Also, we got into cherry orchards of a very noble breed; so that we spent a whole day and two nights, without any power to say farewell. And though the farmer's wife put up both hands to us at the window, she sent out the maid to say that we need not be frightened, if we were real sailors. After giving this girl a kiss (to let her know what our profession was), I sent in word that here was the Master of his Majesty's ship *Defence*, which had defended the British Empire, in the late great victory. That night they made all of us drunk, except me.

Upon these sweet little incidents I must venture to dwell no longer, while having so much of my yarn in the slack, and none but myself to tauten it. Enough that we came in about ten days to the genuine naked colony, without any meaning

of surprise, but now as great ambassadors. And the least that we all expected was a true outburst of wild welcoming. Cannibal Jack had announced his intention to convert his relatives, while Dick and Joe only shook their heads, and seemed to doubt the advantage of it. But we need not have thought of the matter twice, for, strange to say, not one of the savages would for a moment acknowledge us. All the barbarous tribe stood aloof and scowled at their old members with utter abhorrence and contempt, as if at some vast degeneracy. Even Jack's wife, or the woman who might in humanity have been called so, stood moping and mowing at him afar, as if his clothes made a sheep of him, while he with amazement regarded her as if she were only a chimpanzee. Whereupon all of them set up a yell, and rushed with such pelting of mud at us, that we thought ourselves lucky to make our escape without any further mischief.

After hauling out of action in this most inglorious manner, we brought up to refit and revictual at the nearest public-house, a lonely hut where four roads met, and the sign hung from an ancient gibbet. Here we were treated very kindly, and for very little money, so that I was quite astonished after all our feeding. And I happened to say to the landlady that I was surprised to find honesty within a league of Parson Chowne.

"Oh, sir, do you know that dreadful man?" she answered, with her apron up; "or would you like to see him, sir?"

"Madam," said I, with that bow of mine which takes the women captive, "I should like to see him wonderfully; only without his seeing me."

"Of course, of course. All people say that, because of the evil eye

he hath. This house doth belong to him. He be coming for the rent again at two o'clock, and he never faileth. Every farthing will be ready now, through your honour's generosity; and if so be you steps in here, when you hear me give three knuckles at the door, you may see him and welcome for nothing; only you must not speak for ever so."

The landlady showed me a little cellar, opening from our sitting-room, and having a narrow half-boarded hatchway bearing upon her sanded parlour, where she designed to receive the Parson. And then she was half afraid lest I might make a noise and so betray her. But almost before I had time to assure her of my perfect secrecy, the dash of horse's hoofs was heard, and the sound of a man's voice shouting.

"Well done!" said I to myself; "good Parson, years have not decreased thee."

His strong step rang on the lime-ash floor, and his silver spurs made a jingle, and lo, there he stood in the sanded parlour, as noble a Chowne as ever. There was not the sign of a spot of weakness or relenting about him; on his shaven face no bloom of greyness, nor in his coal-black hair one streak. As vigorous, springy, and strenuous seemed he, as when he leaped on board and thrashed me, nearly twelve years ago, as I do believe.

"Woman, where is my money?" he cried, with the old pale frown overcoming him; "twice I have given you time. You know what I always do thereafter."

"Yes, sir, I know what your Reverence doth. Your Reverence never calleth law, but taketh horse-whip to the mans of us."

"Your memory is correct," he answered; "my usual course is to that effect. I have brought my heaviest whip this time, for your

husband has shown arrogance. Can you show cause why he should not have it?"

"Yes, your Reverence, here it is. And God knows how we have scraped for it."

With the glow of triumph which a man's face hardly ever shows, but a woman's cannot be denied of, she spread before him all his rent upon an ancient tray, and every piece of it was copper. Thirty-six shillings she had to pay, and twenty-four times thirty-six was there for his Reverence to count. The hostess looked at him, with a chuckle brewing now under her apron-strings, and ready to rise to her ample breast, and thence to her mouth, if expedient. But she mistook her customer.

"Woman," said Chowne, in his deep low voice, which had no anger in it; "I am tired of signing warrants."

"Warrants, your Worship! For what, if you please?"

"Warrants for thieves who are foisting sham Irish halfpennies on the public. I see no less than seven of them in this sterling stuff of yours. Three months at the treadmill now for yourself and your husband. Say no more. You have tried a trick. Tiverton jail for you both to-morrow."

And there, if you wanted either of them, you must go to find them, only two days afterward, according to what I was told of it. No Welsh gentleman would have dreamed of behaving to his tenants thus, for trying a little joke with him; but Chowne had no sense of any joke, unless himself began it.

Our three cannibals had been trembling at the sound of the Parson's voice, believing that he would drive them back, and feeling that they had no power to withstand his orders. But luckily we had made such a smoke—all our savages having

taken to the use of tobacco gloriously—that when the Parson put his head in, as he must do everywhere, he drew it back in double-quick time, for he hated the weed as old Nick does. And then after calling his groom as a witness to the Irish coinage, he made him tie the whole of the rent-money in his pocket-handkerchief, and off he set at a good round gallop to make out the warrant. You may depend upon it that we four were very soon off as well, and in the opposite direction, after subscribing a guinea among us to comfort the poor woman, who was sobbing her heart out at her mistake, and at the prospect (as seemed to me) of being confined, in more senses than one, within the walls of a prison. For some time I found myself much at a loss about harbouring my convoy; for though I could trust Jack Wildman—as I now began to call him—anywhere and with anything, this was not the case with the other two, who could never be kept from picking up small things that took their fancy. We were shaping a course for Narnton Court, where I intended to sling my own hammock, and Jack's as well, if agreeable; but I durst not offer to introduce Dick and Joe, for the cause aforesaid. Moreover, they had not yet acquired the manners of good society, which were no little insisted upon in Sir Philip Bampfylde's kitchen. Therefore I thought myself very clever, when a settlement of this question suddenly occurred to me.

This was no less than to settle them both under my old ferry-boat, if still to be found as two years back, shored up and turned into a residence. Their rations might be sent down to them, and what happier home could they wish for, with the finest air in the world around them, as well as beautiful scenery. And if it should happen to leak a

little (as seems only natural), what a blessed reflection for a man of due sentiments towards the Lord, that this water is dropping from heaven upon him, instead of rushing up to swallow him into that outrageous sea!

Accordingly so we contrived this affair. Mr Jack Wildman was introduced, under my skilful naval tactics, into the most accomplished circle on the quarter-deck of our head-cook. And he looked so very gently wild, and blushed in his clothes so beautifully, that there was not a maiden all over the place but longed to glance, unbeknown, at him. So that it seemed a most lucky thing that Polly was down with the small-pox, at a place called Muddiford; wherein she had an uncle. Meanwhile Cannibals Dick and Joe lived in the boat, as happily as if they had been born in it, and devoted their time to the slaying and cooking of Sir Philip's hares and rabbits. It was in vain that the gamekeepers did their best to catch them. Dick and Joe could catch hares, as they boasted to me, almost under the watchers' noses; so noble was the result of uniting civilised cunning with savage ingenuity.

I can well believe that no other man, either of my rank or age, would have ventured on the step which now I did resolve upon. This was no less than to pay a visit to my poor little Polly, and risk all probabilities of being disfigured by small-pox. For several times it had crossed my mind, that although she was among relatives, they were not like a father or mother to her, and perhaps she might be but poorly tended, and even in need of money perhaps. For her very own aunt, our Mrs Cockhanterbury, would not go nigh her, and almost shuddered when her name was mentioned. Now it seemed to be only fair and

honest to let Sir Philip know my intention, so that he might (if he should see fit) forbid me to return to his mansion, bringing the risk of infection. But the General only shook his head, and smiled at that idea. "If it be the will of God, we shall have it, of course," he said; "and people run into it all the more by being over-timorous. And I have often thought it sinful to mistrust the Lord so. However, you had better keep smoking a pipe, and not stay more than five minutes; and perhaps you might just as well change your clothes before you come back, and sink the others to air for a week in the river." I was grieved to see him so entirely place his faith in Providence, for that kind of feeling (when thus overdone) ends in what we call "fatalism," such as the very Turks have. So that I was pleased when he called me back, and said, "Take a swim yourself, Llewellyn. I hear that you can swim five miles. Don't attempt that, but swim two, if you like. Swim back to us from Barnstaple bridge, and I will have a boat to meet you, with a wholesome wardrobe."

Thus was the whole of it arranged, and carried out most cleverly. I took poor Polly a bunch of grapes, from one of the Narnton vineries, as well as a number of nice little things, such as only a sailor can think of. And truly I went not a day too soon, for I found her in that weak condition, after the fury

of the plague is past, when every bit of strengthening stuff that can be thought of, or fancied by, the feeble one may turn the scale, and one cheering glance or one smiling word is as good as a beam of the morning. Then after a long walk, I made my swim, and a change of clothes, exactly as the General had commanded me.

In a fortnight afterwards where was I? Why, under the boat, in a burning madness, without a soul to come nigh me, except Jack Wildman and Sir Philip. These two, with the most noble courage, visited me through my sad attack of small-pox, as I was told thereafter, although at the time I knew no one. And at a distance around the boat, a ring of brushwood was kept burning, day and night, to clear the air, and warn the unwary from entering. Everybody gave me up for a living Christian any more, and my coffin was ordered at a handsome figure (as a death upon Narnton premises), ay, and made also, like that of the greatest man that I ever did meet with. Not only this, but two Non-conformist preachers found out (as they always do) that in a weak period of my life, when dissatisfied with my pension, I had been washed away by my poor wife into the scuppers of Dissent. Therefore they prepared two sermons on this judgment of the Lord, and called me a scapegoat; while goodness knows what care they took never to lay hands on me.

THE SITUATION IN FRANCE.

At the last sitting of the French Chamber before the Easter holidays, M. Thiers made a speech; it was not a long one, but it was important, for its avowed object was to tell France where she is. It was received, some part of it at least, with much ill-temper by the so-called majority on the Right, whose objects and preferences it shocked and disappointed. It was eagerly applauded by the Left, whose hopes it distinctly flattered. It declared that reorganisation of finances and of the army is the first duty of the Government; it implied, with tolerable distinctness, that no economies can be looked for in the Budget; it expatiated, with manifest delight and pride, on "the new birth of our glorious army, always faithful to its duty, always faithful to the law;" it renewed the promise that £8,000,000 shall be devoted every year to the repayment of the war debt; it asserted positively that order will be maintained by "the army of the law;" it suggested that France possesses alliances abroad; it affirmed that "she wants peace, and does not think of war;" it proclaimed "the incorrigibility and the powerlessness of parties." It was this last phase especially which raised the indignation of the Right. Many of the great questions of the moment were thus touched upon—finances, military organisation, internal tranquillity, foreign friendships, maintenance of the present Government against "parties"—all had their turn, all were explained as M. Thiers wishes them to be understood. The speech was not a national manifesto, it was an expression of individual views; but those views belong to the authorised representative of the nation.

He knew, when he gave utterance to them, that Europe as well as France was listening outside the door; we may therefore reasonably take his oration as a programme and a text, and try to make an opinion for ourselves upon it.

The first point, in order and in importance, is the reconstruction of Finances, which has been effected with a rapidity and a success most strikingly indicative of the marvellous elasticity and solid wealth of France. This observation does not apply to the means employed, about which opinions may largely differ, but to the result achieved, and to the ease with which, thus far, the country is evidently supporting its tremendous burden. The total cost of the war, which has gone on growing, seems likely to amount, directly and indirectly, to somewhere about £360,000,000, of which £129,000,000 have already been raised by permanent loans, £53,000,000 have been borrowed from the Bank of France, about £130,000,000 stand over for future payment, while the balance of £48,000,000 is chargeable, in various ways, to the budgets of the next few years. The increase of annual expenditure which all this represents, in interest, sinking fund, and outlay, amounts to about £28,000,000, so that France has now to furnish a revenue of about £115,000,000. The latter figures are not quite exact, for the discussion of the Budget of 1872 is not yet terminated, but they give a sufficiently approximate idea of the position. It should also be observed that nearly £4,000,000 of new taxes are still unvoted by the Chamber, in consequence of its unwillingness to adopt the duties on raw materials

which the Government wishes to impose, and that the gap to that extent has been filled up by temporary arrangements. The interest of all these great figures does not, however, lie so much in the selection of new taxes, or in the more or less clever schemes adopted in order to balance the account, as in the fact that these enormous imposts are being levied without affecting the trade and the recovery of the country, and without even any sign of distress or difficulty. Some of the new taxes are producing considerably more than the sums which they were estimated to bring in, and not one of them appears to be pressing with undue weight on the classes of the population which it affects. These facts will cause no surprise to those who have studied the immense resources which France possesses; but to the mass of us it does seem wonderful that she is able to carry such a load without a symptom of fatigue. Of course there are certain categories of trade which have suffered. The retail shops in Paris constitute, however, the most evident example of that result; and it may be fairly urged, in their case, that the Commune is more to blame than the war. The great industries are thriving; wine, silk, coal, and iron are in active demand; there are abundant foreign orders for the various special products which France habitually exports; and though there is a diminution of home expenditure in luxuries, that can scarcely be considered otherwise than as an advantage, after the wild extravagance of the fifteen years which closed in 1870.

But it does not seem quite evident that M. Thiers is justified in taking to himself, or to his Administration, the sole merit of this situation. It is a consequence of the solidity and productive power of the country, rather than

of any inventivity of his. He has rendered the recovery more easy by inspiring the nation with the hope that he would keep things straight enough to allow traffic to go on safely. But that sort of action is merely negative; the positive effect has been brought about by inherent forces to which the President has in no degree contributed, which would have asserted themselves with equal vigour under any other chief, and which are totally independent of the principles of financial organisation which he supports with such excitable pertinacity. We all know how bitterly those principles have been attacked; and that a large number of competent judges, both in and out of France, are of opinion that many of the schemes which M. Thiers advocates are thoroughly unsound, and, if applied, will do more harm than good. The time for really testing them has not yet arrived; but meantime the President assumes the privilege of pointing joyously to the rally of home and foreign trade, and of exclaiming to those who are polite enough to believe him, "This is my work!" If, however, he does deserve any other praise in the matter than that of inspiring confidence in the preservation of order, that praise is still more due to his late Finance Minister than to himself. M. Pouyer Quertier, who quitted office the other day, did more than any man in France to bring the Treasury into form, and to clear away the difficulties of the position. He gets no thanks for it now, and it is precisely for that reason that it is fair and honest to recall the services which he rendered. When he entered on his Ministry a year ago, he found £40,000 in the till; that sum represented the entire assets at his disposal. In twelve months he has

paid £80,000,000 to Germany, and has provided amply for all current needs besides. It suits the absorbing temper of the President to take the credit of it, but the work was done by M. Pouyer Quertier, and admirably well done too. The reorganisation of all the services is now almost terminated—it will soon be quite complete; it has been effected with singular success and speed. The promise made at Bordeaux has been kept, but let us allot the credit of its realisation to the right persons in the right proportions.

Where M. Thiers may really claim nearly all the merit for himself is in the reconstitution of the army; that has been his labour of love—it is there that he has employed his utmost skill. It was, indeed, not an easy task. Half his soldiers had come back sullenly from captivity, and the other half were growling discontentedly about their real or imaginary wrongs, when he had suddenly to group them into new regiments, and to lead them into the dissolving influences of a civil war. And yet, a short time afterwards, France had an army,—a real, well-organised, not badly-disciplined army, in the sense which Europe now attaches to that word. Whether it be a good thing for France is another question; but considered in itself alone, as an effort of administration and strong will, under circumstances of enormous difficulty, it is impossible not to recognise that it does honour to the man by whom it was planned and executed. The French army is now as powerful as it was before the war; it includes 450,000 men; its interior condition is improving every day. All this would be very well if it did not cost £18,000,000, and if there were no one to object to it. But there are considerations which seem to indicate that, pos-

sibly, it may be a vast error for France to have any army at all, other than for the guardianship of home order (for which 200,000 men would suffice most amply).

M. Thiers informs us in his speech that "France wants peace, and does not think of war;" but there are a good many people, especially at Berlin, who do not believe one word of this comforting assurance; who, on the contrary, are thoroughly convinced that, directly France supposes that she is ready, she will attack Germany once more. But France cannot be ready for some years. The Army Organisation Bill is not yet voted by the Chamber; the principle of universal service is not yet adopted; the *matériel* necessary for 1,500,000 men has to be got together; the new fortifications round Paris have to be constructed. For these reasons it is scarcely likely that the return match will be proposed by France till about 1877 at the very soonest, especially as she will need money as well as men, and must wait a little before she can dispose of any surplus cash. All this while, however, Prussia will be taking notes; the military *attaché* at her embassy in Paris will be reporting twice a week; she will know, with singular precision, the exact date at which France will pass from the present state of incubation into a condition which will render her really difficult to crush. Before then, the three milliards which are still outstanding will be paid; Prussia will no longer have the slightest reason for giving her enemy further time, and will, probably, suddenly put in one of those startling notes which shake up Europe. She will say to France—at least it will be very strange if she does not—"You are forming an army of 1,500,000 men, with 3000 cannon: your object is to attack me. Thus far you have got only 600,000

men, while I have 1,200,000 ; I have screwed out of you all you owed me in our last account, and have no kind of motive for waiting till you are ready ; I therefore give you notice that if your army is not instantly reduced to 200,000 men I shall declare war, and this time I will not spare you." Sympathy for France might make us extremely sorry to see this happen, but, in reason, we could lay no blame on Germany. It has been pretended that Prince Bismark has already communicated to M. Thiers an ultimatum of this kind. The statement was, however, entirely premature ; and, notwithstanding the irritation which is known to exist in Berlin, there is no probability of any such step being taken now.

But the excessive likelihood of some future action such as this on the German side makes it more than doubtful whether France would not show more wisdom if she waited for events, instead of trying to create them for herself. Accidents of various kinds may happen : the unity of Germany, which has been so suddenly provoked by the struggle against a common foe, may not be durable, for there are secret hates between South and North which might have burst out already if France had not been mad enough to temporarily choke them off by the distraction of a fight between Gallia and Germania ; revolutionary movements may occur. The interest of France appears, therefore, to us onlookers, to lie in the adoption of silent patience ; in the organisation of her army on a much smaller effective footing, but with a shorter period of service, so as to save money without diminishing the reserves of trained men, and especially, so as to give her frightful neighbour no right to interfere. She should follow the example of Prussia after Jena. But M. Thiers feels perhaps that he is an old man, that

he has not much time before him, and that if he is destined to lead the red trousers into Königsberg, and then to write the 'History of the Second War' (which may be the crowning ambition of his life, for it would simultaneously realise his old dream of military glory and his hope to permanently retain the title of "the National Historian"), he must get on promptly with preliminary arrangements. Such a motive cannot be imputed to him seriously, but it does look as if he means fighting, and nothing else ; no other interpretation can be assigned to the warlike preparations which he is now pushing on with all his might.

He talks to us of alliances ; he hints that France does not stand alone in Europe ; and seems thereby to signify that he expects he will discover somewhere a co-operation in the self-evident projects of revenge which he publicly declares he does not cherish ; but to us who are not in the secret of his diplomacy these fancies have no sense. We know that England will not land troops at Havre to help France to take back the Rhine ; we see no reason to suppose that Italy will risk her newly-acquired unity in order to testify her gratitude to the nation which she has never forgiven for winning Solferino for her thirteen years ago ; we cannot see why Austria, who has enough of her own to do, should be desirous to run new dangers now on the chance that they may turn out luckily for herself and France ; and as for Russia, common-sense seems to indicate that her object can only be to work with Prussia in the hope that Eastern Europe may some day be split up between them. Whether, in this last event, England would intervene once more to save Constantinople, is a question which we must leave to our Cabinets of the

future ; but that eventuality is, according to present prospects, the only one which would supply an ally to France. It may be that M. Thiers let fall the phrase, "it is false that France is isolated, that she has no alliances," solely to flatter the vanity of the country, and to inspire the pleasant notion that he is on the road to the apparently unattainable result of getting some one to espouse his cause. But if the French are susceptible of being influenced by considerations of that kind, we, at all events, are outside their pale : we try to judge by likelihood and reason, unswayed by any sentiments or preferences, excepting that instinctive sympathy for France which is at the bottom of most English hearts, and which, perhaps, enables us to better see her dangers. Our view appears to us to be friendly, just, and wise. We well know that France will not listen to it for one instant, and that she will go on arming, notwithstanding our advice to do nothing of the kind ; but our view is our own property, and France, though she may reject it, has no right to complain of our entertaining it. We freely grant that M. Thiers is an admirable military organiser ; but we believe that he is altogether wrong to organise at all at present, beyond the limits which strict necessity and strict economy impose.

That this army, "faithful to its duty, faithful to the law," will steadily maintain internal order, is probably quite true ; but it must be remembered that fidelity to "the law" means fidelity to the Government, and nothing else. "Law" and "Thiers" are, in this case, synonymous. "Law" is not in France an abstract essence, a power above all Ministerial changes, as we most happy islanders understand the word : it means, just now, the President and the Provisional Repub-

lic ; two years ago it meant the Empire ; two years hence it may mean something else,—but it will imply always the Government which is. The born duty of the French army, as it is understood by the rulers of the land, is to keep them in their place, and to do battle against everybody who tries to turn them out ; it can have no opinion of its own, otherwise it would not be "faithful." As things go in France, this is a sensible and even necessary interpretation, for no Government could exist at all there if the army did not support it : it is not therefore in a spirit of criticism or disapprobation that the true signification of the word "law" is indicated here, but solely to render clear what M. Thiers meant when he talked of the fidelity of the army which he has formed. If another revolution should give that army another master, we shall hear from the new-comer exactly similar declarations. Meanwhile, it seems eminently unlikely that the army will either ever make a revolution itself, or that it will ever fail to put one down. It is true that its attitude depends somewhat upon its chiefs—that a regiment may follow its colonel in revolt ; that reservation does not, however, lead to much in France, where military *pronunciamentos* do not enter into national habits. It may confidently be expected that so long as the Government remains moderate, so long as the control of the army continues in the hands of prudent Ministers, no insurrection would have the faintest chance of success ; but if constitutional changes should bring a violent Cabinet into power, we may see the army purposely disorganised so as to leave free scope for the action of the Socialists ; and then, at the very moment when it would be most needed, there would be no "army of the law" at all. This hypothesis is unfortu-

nately not so exaggerated as it may seem.

The impossibility of any reductions in the Budget, which M. Thiers announces as if it were a point beyond discussion, has a close and necessary connection with the scheme of Army Reorganisation. On looking through the elements of expenditure, the largest figure which strikes the eye, after the interest on the debt, is the sum of £18,000,000 for the Army. Almost all the other public services have been cut down. The Navy estimates, for instance, have been reduced by £1,200,000; and Public Works, though they are more than ever necessary, receive £2,300,000 less than their former share; but the Minister of War gets £3,000,000 more than the Empire gave him. The report on the Budget of 1872, which was laid before the Chamber in December by M. Pouyer Quartier, explained in detail the numerous diminutions which have been effected, and it looks as if they were really carried to the furthest limit on every hand but this one chapter of war expenditure. Even the reduced subventions to theatres and races, which have excited some attention during the last few weeks, may be considered as legitimate and necessary, in consideration of the material interests which they affect. The Army Budget constitutes the one item of utterly unproductive outlay; and it is easy to understand that, if it be maintained in its present form, no more economies can be squeezed out; for paring has gone on ruthlessly in every other direction, even to discharging the old soldiers who were doorkeepers at the Elysée. But no one dares to touch the Army, no one dares to publicly expose the future danger and the present inutility of attempting to constitute a force with which war may be begun again. If it were quite

certain that Germany will stand patiently aside during the next few years, so as to give France full time to work out her actual plans, it would be unpatriotic to object to the project of revenge, which, in that case, might be pursued with a sufficient probability of ultimate realisation to justify the huge expense in view. But as the arguments seem to point the other way—as the considerations which have already been invoked appear to indicate that France will not get all the time she wants, and that her prospects of crushing Prussia depend far more on the hazard of European complications than on her own independent efforts—it is indeed to be regretted that no one has the courage to stand up in the Assembly and to speak out against the Army plan as being thoroughly unsound in principle, and as being the sole cause of the “impossibility of reductions” which M. Thiers proclaims with so much conviction. It would require pluck to do it, for the advocate of such ideas would be shrieked at with that marvellous force of howling of which the Versailles Chamber possesses the monopoly; but the proposal to postpone revenge, and simultaneously to save £10,000,000 every year, would be so wise, that its author would earn, outside France, by that one suggestion, the reputation of a patriot and a politician. Of course it would be rejected by an immense majority, but that is no reason for not making the attempt. It will not be risked, however, for no deputy will face the momentary unpopularity which such an act would provoke in France. We must expect to see the £18,000,000 become a permanent element of the Budget, and the theory of “no reductions” pass into an accepted rule.

It is satisfactory to find a partial set-off against this grave error in

the resolution to maintain the sinking fund of £8,000,000. That sum is to be employed, at first, exclusively to pay off the advance of the Bank of France; and a good deal has been said and written against the policy of adding so large an amount to the annual taxation in order to refund a loan which now costs only one per cent per annum. Regarded in that light, the operation does look unnecessary. But as it is impossible to admit that the State can permanently remain in debt for £50,000,000 to the Bank—as the advance, if not paid off, must at some time or other be replaced by rentes at $5\frac{1}{2}$ or 6 per cent—as the credit of the French Treasury will be largely strengthened by the resolute adoption of a yearly *amortissement*—as it is just and practical to impose on the immediate present the obligation of clearing off, in part, the consequences of the war, instead of leaving them to be borne in full by coming generations,—it may be urged, with reason, that the arguments in favour of the sinking fund are far stronger than those which can be invoked against it, and that M. Thiers is entirely right in his refusal to abandon it. It is, however, an enormous weight to carry; and the day may come when the virtuous intentions which now exist will fade away under the pressure of necessity.

So far as money questions are concerned, M. Thiers's speech stopped short at the points which have been mentioned here. It made no allusion to the arrangements which he has in view for the payment of the £120,000,000 which are still due to Germany. It is, however, tolerably well known that the amount will be raised in the ordinary form—that is to say, by an issue of new rentes, with perhaps a temporary advance of part of it on Exchequer bills; and that all special schemes

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which have been so abundantly proposed during the last six months are finally set aside as impracticable. But though the shape of the arrangement is no longer doubtful, the date of its realisation is entirely uncertain; nothing can be fixed about it until Germany has accepted the principle of an anticipated payment. At first sight it seems incredible that a creditor should refuse to take his money before the date at which it is nominally due; but in this case there are circumstances of so peculiar a nature, that Germany may perhaps decline to receive a shilling now. By the Berlin Treaty of 12th October last, she has the right to hold six departments until she is paid in full: she receives interest, meanwhile, at 5 per cent per annum, and she is to have the money on 1st March 1874. If she were quite sure that France means to rigorously keep the peace, she would have no motive for refusing an offer of the £120,000,000 at once, or at any period during the next two years; but acceptance of the cash means evacuation of the six departments which are held in guarantee, and that is where the difficulty arises. No one can presume to say what Prince Bismark may decide to do; but it is quite possible that he may prefer to exercise his right of occupation until 1874, for the sake of the strategical advantages which the German army would enjoy on French ground if any difficulty arose. Not that France can, anyhow, be in a position to go to war within two years, but she might show signs which would tempt her prudent adversaries to stop where they are. On the other hand, as Germany notoriously wants the money, she may elect to take it and go home, subject to coming back again if France grows too provocative. The matter may be solved to-morrow, but thus far it is in sus-

pense, and nobody but the great Chancellor himself can fix the moment at which it will assume a final form.

Regarded as a purely French question, the liberation of the territory ought to be one of the very first to deal with, and yet there exists a singular indifference about it among the public. Directly the spiked helmets disappeared from St Denis, the Parisians seemed to utterly forget that they had only moved a little further off, and still glistened on French ground. The country, as a whole, has never realised the humiliation which the prolonged occupation of the eastern districts should provoke in all French hearts. The national subscription, which was opened with so much pomp, in order to "purge the soil of the presence of the foe," has been an ignominious failure. Even the strong commercial and military reasons which combine to render it essential to get the Germans out of the Reims district, where so many railways meet, have not sufficed to bring about a negotiation for the evacuation of even that one section of the six departments. M. Thiers may have had good reason for saying nothing on the subject at the last sitting of the Chamber before Easter, but he will necessarily have to speak upon it before long, and we may presume that he will suggest a series of payments on account, with proportionate evacuation of the mortgaged territory. The opinion of European bankers is, that, when the loan is issued, the £120,000,000 cannot be called up in full within a shorter period than three years; but the final payment could be guaranteed so as to obtain the immediate departure of the occupying forces, just as was done at Berlin in October last for the six other departments which were evacuated at that date,

on condition of the payment of £26,000,000 (the balance of the two first milliards) during the six following months. If Germany agrees to go away as soon as France can find the money, or can secure its production at future epochs, the last material traces of the war will disappear; but it would be premature, for the reasons already given, to count upon this result as proximate or certain. No one knows what the opinion of Prince Bismark may be upon it; we can only wait till the Sphinx has spoken.

Other grave subjects were omitted in M. Thiers's speech. It said nothing about the denunciation of the Commercial Treaties, or the religious question, or the causes which have contributed to place France where she is to-day. It may have been an act of prudence in the President to avoid such awkward points; but as we are not obliged to imitate his reserve, there is no reason why we should not consider them as we pass on.

The eight Customs Treaties which France accepted between 1860 and 1868 were all made for ten years absolutely, with the right on both sides of terminating them by one year's notice at the expiration of those ten years. The English Treaty, which was the first in order, ran out in 1870; the Belgian Contract, which dates from 1861, has expired also;—the French Government had therefore the legal right to denounce them both, and has just used that right: they will, consequently, reach their end in the spring of 1873. But the bargains made with Switzerland, Austria, and Portugal will not attain their ten years' limit until 1877 and 1878; while "the favoured-nations clause," which was admitted last year into the Treaty of Peace with Germany, insures the benefit of the existing

duties to the latter country for the same minimum of time. The result is, that Belgium and England will be the only countries immediately affected by the new tariff which may be adopted, and that they will find it difficult twelve months hence to compete for French orders with the rivals whose Treaties are still in force. It has been suggested that the two excluded nations should try to get their goods in by forwarding them through the frontiers, where the old duties will continue to apply; but this sort of smuggling would be almost impossible to carry on; certificates of origin would be required, and fraud would be energetically suppressed. We may therefore anticipate that our exports to France will be considerably diminished from next March, unless, indeed, the new duties which will be imposed upon us should be so light that they will not in reality stop our trade. That, however, can scarcely be expected; for the avowed object of M. Thiers is to acquire what he calls "the liberty of tariffs," in order to extract from the Customs a larger return than the £5,000,000 which they now produce. He has declared that his object is purely fiscal, and in no degree protectionist; that he wants to bring in money, not to shield home manufactures: but, somehow, nobody quite believes him; and the notion that his real dream is to bar the door to foreign competition is as prevalent in France as it is in England. The debate which is coming on in the Chamber will tell us where the truth lies. Till then we can only regret that we should be the object of a partial measure, which, from the circumstances which attend it, is not likely to be beneficial to the French Treasury; and that a Treaty which for twelve years has served as a real

bond of union between the two countries, should be approaching the term of its existence.

The religious question assumes two totally distinct shapes: the situation of the Pope in Rome, and the movement of opinion inside France, are both included in it. The former subject has already been brought before the Chamber on a petition from the Bishops, but, in the present state of things, no discussion of it could have done the slightest good. No diplomatic intervention in favour of the Holy See could produce results, unless it were followed up by the threat of action in another form. This is not a moment when, politically or materially, France can indulge in menaces; so the Government most properly declared that a debate on the Roman question would be inopportune and humiliating; and Monsignor Dupanloup wisely bowed his head before the necessity of postponement. Time may modify existing facts. Hostile troops have guarded the outlets of the Vatican on a good many occasions already; Popes have had to fly or go to prison; the prospects of the temporal power have often been blacker than they are now; and yet history is there to prove that, in some strange way, the Church has always held her ground. So it may be once more; and it is in the conviction that "God will take care of His own" that the more ardent of the French Catholics are waiting for a change which will enable France to again assert her claim to be considered as the natural defender of the Holy See. Human foresight can, however, detect no present probabilities of any such result. So long as the French were divided into two main classes, the pious and the indifferent, the former were able, by energetic movement,

to exercise a large control over the policy of the country; but a third category has sprung up of late, with the declared object of destroying all religion. Its influence has grown prodigiously, and the issue now seems to be no longer between indifference and Popery, but between resolute destructive infidelity and Christianity in any form. The Communists had the cunningness to leave the Protestants alone; their material attacks were directed solely against the Catholics. Their representatives in the French press are continuing the same apparent attitude; but all that is a mask put on until they think that they have grown strong enough to war against all religion. The more advanced amongst these demolishers have already indicated their final object. That amiable citizen, M. Mottu, for instance, has been good enough to publicly declare that he is "the personal enemy of Jesus Christ;" and the others take the same view, only they are afraid to own it just at present. It looks, however, as if their time would come—as if the forcible suppression of faith in any form, is a result to be anticipated in France. We should make a vast mistake if we supposed that Popery alone is to be cleared out, and if we consequently allowed our Protestant proclivities to lead us into any sympathy with the movement. If the Reds ever reach the top, there will be an end of Churches; marriage, paternity, and prayer will be suppressed by law, as being contrary to good morals and to the dignity of man. We saw all this in 1792: we shall see it all again if the Conservatives allow themselves, as seems most probable, to be beaten now. Monarchy and religion, Republic and materialism, are growing to be somewhat synonymous expressions. The moderate

Republicans would be horrified at such a notion, for many of them continue to believe in God, though they repudiate a king; but the Moderates constitute so feeble a minority numerically, that they will lose all power if a Republic should be finally adopted. The Catholics are, however, trying to put their backs together in order to improve their prospects of resistance; and they derive some help from the attacks to which they are exposed. The revolt of the three priests (Michaud in Paris, Junqua and Moulis at Bordeaux), who have set up a little opposition of their own to the new dogma of Infallibility, may be mentioned as having served the very cause which those gentlemen desired to oppose; for, in reality, it is without importance, excepting in so far as it may have served to cement the true Roman feeling amongst the Catholics. The question is narrowing itself to one point—God or no God; the end depends, so far as our insufficient reason enables us to judge, on the political future of the country. And yet reason is useless in such cases. Men in general, and Frenchmen in particular, have decreed a good many times already that they see no use in God, and they will not have Him; but those men get shot, or hung, or guillotined, and then God comes back again. So it will doubtless be this time again in France, and so it will perhaps be at Rome, notwithstanding all the seeming probabilities the other way.

The causes which have contributed to place France where she is have never been considered in the French press; they are but rarely alluded to in private talk; and it is easy to understand that M. Thiers has no desire to discuss them publicly. It is extremely handy and agreeable to call everybody but

yourself a "traitor," and to heap abuse on the departed Emperor; but in logic and in fact, there do seem to have been other reasons than treason and incapacity for the strange events of the last two years. If the causes of these events had disappeared, if it were impossible that they could occur again, they would then belong to history alone, and could not be regarded as forming part of the present situation. But as, on the contrary, the greater part of them continue to exist in undiminished force, as we may see a good many of them at work hereafter, it is useful to try to put a name upon them, so that we, at all events, may have some idea what it is that has laid France so low.

Materially, Prussia won because she had most men, and because they were well commanded and well organised. That, however, is the small side of the question; its real interest lies in the reasons of the inferiority of France. That inferiority, so far as we can trace it, resulted from its vanity; from its spirit of opposition to every Government, whatever be its name or object; from its odious system of education. Other subsidiary motives lie hidden beneath these three; but these three contain the main elements of the truth, and they all subsist to-day as vigorously as before the war. France supposed herself to be invincible. The nation, as a whole, conscientiously believed in the *promenade à Berlin*. When news of failure came it was indignantly denied, not only at the beginning, but down to the very end. Every General was to be a "saviour," until he was declared a "traitor;" there were no middle terms—for vanity counted upon success, and would only explain its absence by imputing dishonesty to those who were unable to attain it. But the non-

adoption of the new Army Bill which the Imperial Government brought forward after Sadowa had rendered success impossible; France was utterly unfit to fight. The Emperor committed the monstrous folly of declaring war, knowing, as he well did, that Germany outnumbered him by at least two to one; but at all events he had begged the Chamber to give him men, and the Chamber had refused. The utterly insufficient plan of the Garde Mobile was only adopted because it was evident that no larger measure would be carried. The debates of 1867 show how the then Ministers vainly implored the Corps Legislatif to reorganise the army on a large footing. The Opposition proclaimed that the Emperor wanted to increase his force for dynastic purposes; that there was no possibility of danger; that if ever danger came, the entire nation would rise to meet it; that every Frenchman would become a soldier,—and more ranting nonsense of the same sort. The majority shrank from facing the unpopularity to which a vote of compulsory service would have exposed it: the Chamber left France utterly unprepared. The teaching of the University had stimulated the disposition towards this vanity and this love of opposition. The narrowness of that teaching, its tendency towards abstractions, the utter want in it of any kind of conviction, moral, political, or religious, had worked their way into the upper classes, and had destroyed in them the power of producing unselfish, active citizens. So long as the University continues to be intrusted with the duty of making Frenchmen, so long will Frenchmen be excitable and preposterously confident in attack, disheartened and recriminating in defeat. Its monopoly of teaching did not produce

one real man during all those vast events. Gambetta was the only one who reached the surface; no one else appeared either to aid him or to replace him. The reform of character must begin at school. If boys acquire no convictions; if they are pushed on towards speculative study and away from practical applications; if vanity and the love of contradicting everybody in power, from an usher to an emperor, are to remain unchecked,—it is not likely that they will grow into the sort of men who alone can restore their country to the place which she has lost. They must abandon their disposition to believe in nothing that is disagreeable; they must compare themselves with other people; they must act on the lessons of experience; they must associate their efforts for a common end, instead of devoting them to individual ambitions. But, thus far, they are doing nothing of the kind. Both boys and men are diligently pursuing the road which they followed before the war, just as if nothing at all had happened to inspire them with doubt as to the soundness of their system. Ideas of this sort are unpleasant, so the French scarcely ever make any allusion to them. A remodelling of the entire scheme of secondary education would damage so many interests and upset so many habits, that no action in it is probable at present; and yet it seems to be indispensable, if the next generation is to be raised to a higher level of principles and of conduct.

We may now revert to the last point of M. Thiers's speech—the allusion to "incorrigible and powerless parties." That phrase contains the essence of the political situation. M. Thiers pronounced it with a sort of unction, as if it came from the bottom of his heart. It raised the Right to anger and the Left to joy;

for the other subjects mentioned, exciting as they are, and wild as are the scenes which they in their turn provoke in that riotous Assembly, do not carry French deputies to the pitch of furious emotion which is produced by any authoritative expression of opinion as to the permanence or the suppression of the Republic. That, after all, is the great home question; that underlies all the rest, and makes all else turn pale. Budget, Army, Peace or War, Alliances, or Tariffs, are all baby-play compared to the prospects of Monarchy or of Republic. It was to prepare the way for a new monarchy that the Right voted M. Thiers to his present place; it is to prevent a monarchy from being established that the Left is working to keep him in it. It was therefore natural enough that the Right, where the "parties" are at present supposed to sit, should object to the appellations of "incorrigible" and "powerless," and should shout at an attack which was directed against them alone by the President whom they elected; and that the Left, which, theoretically, contains no "parties," because it supports the Government which is, should clap its hands with satisfaction when M. Thiers informed them that, in his opinion, the "parties" opposite will effect nothing. M. Thiers is probably quite right in his appreciation, so far as immediate results are concerned; but the correctness of his judgment in the matter does not comfort the wounded Right, which originally expected, with apparent reason, that the President would govern with and by them, and did not expect that he would adopt the amazing principle of working with no side, but with all sides—with no majority, but with scratch supporters who vary every day. He may be right to

maintain the "Provisoire," but he could easily do that without constantly offending the men to whom he owes his place, and who certainly did not put him in it to be bullied by him when he got there. Now that he no longer particularly wants them, he calls them "parties," incorrigible and useless—and they do not like it. With us the word "party" bears a very different interpretation from that which attaches to it in France. With us it historically belongs to all ideas, whether in or out; in France it is solely applicable to people who do not agree with the form of government which may happen at the moment to have reached the top. Republicans, whatever be their shade, have temporarily ceased to be a "party," because they are in office: that designation now applies to Legitimists, Orléanists, and Imperialists alone; while the Thiersists and the whole Left are supposed to represent "the voice of France." This arrangement is not precisely logical, but it is so singularly agreeable and convenient to those who profit by it, that we naturally find it vigorously maintained by all the *régimes* which successively get uppermost. Even the Paris Commune called the Versailles a "party," as if the word were an insult and a disgrace to those to whom it is addressed. It is useful to insist on the real French meaning of the appellation; for otherwise it might not be quite easy to comprehend that M. Thiers's observation to the Right was, in reality, "My Royalist friends, you are out of office, and I intend to keep you out."

If they could turn him out instead, they would do it without much hesitation; but legislative assemblies cannot act without a majority, and there is no majority at Versailles. There never has been one since the Chamber came away

from Bordeaux; it exhausted all its cohesive power as soon as it had spasmodically appointed M. Thiers to be head of the Executive. That one effort was made because it was indispensable to adopt some form of momentary government in order to obtain peace; but directly that was done, the "parties" began operations for their own account, each in its own direction, each struggling to prevent the other from succeeding. One after another their chances faded. The Legitimists might possibly have carried their Fifth Henry, if they had dared to proclaim him King at Bordeaux; the Orléanists never held the same opportunity, but they have muddled away whatever force they had by hesitation and inaction; the Imperialists have kept quiet because they could do nothing else, limiting their subterranean efforts to upsetting the other two. The Republicans, on the contrary, though they form only a minority in the present Chamber, have stifled their mutual hates and jealousies (which are vigorous), in order to stand together for the common end of excluding monarchy in every form. Such unity as they possess, can never be attained on the other side; because, if neither Orléanists, Legitimists, nor Imperialists can force their way to place, their next desire, of course, is to prevent their neighbours from doing it either. So, in fact, they help to keep up the Republic which they all detest, in order that a monarchical restoration may assume no other form than their own. This is somewhat like the conduct of our old friend "the dog in the manger."

It looks as if they would discover some day that they have gone on too long with this "I can't, you shan't," policy. As the Assembly is now constituted, it notoriously contains a larger number of Monarchists

(of all shades) than of Republicans. The latter category—it has just been shown that “party” is not now the word to use when speaking of the Left—has somewhat increased its members during the last few months, by the desertion from the other side of certain deputies, who either do not much care what form of government France has, or who have arrived at the sensible conviction that, though the Chamber contains three distinct elements out of which a strong monarchical party could be formed, those elements will never unite; and that it is consequently useless to wait any longer for present movement in that direction. But, notwithstanding this, the Republicans are still in a minority, and could not carry a vote proclaiming the Republic as the definite form of constitution. New elections, general or partial, will, however, take place at some time or other, and the result of these elections may perhaps be to send up so large a reinforcement to the Left side of the House, that it may suddenly be able to impose its will on the other sections. It is because the Left believes that this supposition is well grounded, that it is making such desperate efforts to obtain a dissolution. It counts on the extension of Socialist opinions which is reported to have taken place in the provinces, especially in the south, to win many seats which are now occupied by Royalists; and the general impression amongst country residents is, that this expectation would be realised. If so, the Republic would be immediately declared for the fifth or sixth time to be definitive, imperishable, one and indivisible. And this might be, in the long-run, the very best thing that could happen for the Monarchists; for who can doubt that the Republicans, having suppressed their

rivals, would forthwith proceed to suppress each other? Thus far they hold together, in a sort of way, because they are not the masters, because their situation is avowedly and essentially provisional; but the moment they got a regularly-established constitutional right to power, they would inevitably begin to quarrel between themselves as to the precise form in which that power should be exercised. Socialism, Communism, Moderatism, and all the other sects, would struggle for the mastery, and would prove their mutual enmity by calling each other “parties.” Out of all this a reaction might arise; and, though it is quite useless to refer to precedents on historical experience in a country where surprises are more probable than any seeming certainties, it does not look unlikely that a master would then have a chance of getting in.

At the same time it cannot be denied that, if the Republic were able to assume a respectable, serious form, if it were not discredited and disgraced by its own chiefs, if it proceeded wisely and sedately to soothe down the country and to foster confidence, it could have as fair a prospect of durability as any other system which could be applied. Abstractly, there is no kind of reason why a Republic should not succeed. The difficulty is to prevent its serving, as it has always hitherto done, as an occasion for insane experiments in social questions, and for the assertion of personal ambitions. The theory of a Republic is attractive; it pretends to realise the dream of a vast nation governing itself by its collective wisdom, of equality of rights and duties, of the noble virtues which republics alone are supposed to stimulate, and of the high-souled thoughts

and practices which liberty and fraternity are said by their promoters to necessarily entail. But, in fact, so far as we have gone yet, results run the other way. French Republics do not bring about these splendid consequences; they cause a good deal of disorder and some killing, and they have always ended thus far in a tyrant. Of course it is quite possible that this time we may look on at a success, at a period of abnegation and self-sacrifice, when everybody acts for France and forgets himself—at a Chamber discussing wise measures with the calm of Conscript Fathers—at M. Thiers voluntarily descending from the throne of "Provisoire the First"—at Gambetta imitating Garibaldi, and going to live at St Helena. All this is possible, and if it were to happen, the Republic might be really founded; but is it likely? Are we not rather justified in suspecting that it will wind up with another Monarchy?

Meanwhile it cannot be pretended, even by the most eager partisans of any one of the three Pretenders, that the slightest possibility exists of a Restoration of any kind before a Republic has been seriously tried. Accidents may occur, unexpected circumstances may smooth away existing difficulties, but, as the facts stand now, neither the Comte de Chambord, nor the Comte de Paris, nor the ex-Emperor, have a chance of immediate power. On the contrary, all seems to point to the maintenance of the actual system until the Chamber shall have become Republican enough to vote for a permanent Republic. In other words, no change whatever can be looked for until after the next elections; and those elections seem likely to go against the Monarchists, and to convert the present temporary Republic into a definitive one. The "parties"

had their turn a year ago, but they did not know it, and did not use it. The country had then no time to think, and, as a whole, it went for representatives of peace and order. During the last twelve months, however, there has been a considerable change in public opinion: the masses, especially in the rural districts, still want tranquillity, but they have discovered that they can have it under a nominal Republic. They have learned that it is not a special gift of a Royalty or an Empire, and they cannot therefore be expected to vote next time against Republicans because they are supposed to represent disorder. That they will do so at some future period is very likely, but that will only be if the Republicans deserve it. The Socialist propaganda, which is being actively pushed on in the towns, and even in the country districts, furnishes another reason for anticipating not only that the present composition of the Chamber will be seriously modified by new elections, but that many of the new deputies will be Red enough to propose measures of so violent a nature that they will thereby upset their own Republic, and will so reopen the door which is temporarily closed to Monarchy.

But how and when will the new elections take place? A good deal depends upon the answer which time may give to that grave question. If the Right can hold its own, they will be staved off indefinitely, perhaps even until the Chamber has lived through its five years of maximum existence. If the Left can impose its will, they will come off at once, or, at all events, at the rate of one-fifth (a hundred and fifty deputies) each year. Until this fundamental difficulty has been dealt with, no change can reasonably be expected; because, as has been previously explained,

there is at present no majority in the Chamber in favour of any one of the proposed solutions. The readers of the 'Times' already understand the position of this element of the subject, and indeed of every other point connected with the political situation of France; for the letters of the Paris correspondent of that journal have, for months past, contained the most masterly and truthful pictures of the position. It may indeed be said, especially by those who have been able to study those letters on the spot, and to recognise that their critical exactness is equal to the statesmanlike elevation of their views, that they contain the entire political history of the country day by day. But there are people who do not see the 'Times,' and who, therefore, need explanations which can only be given here in a far less striking form. For that motive it is necessary to insist on the importance of the decision which may be adopted with reference to the new elections; not that postponement would have much influence on their result, for the Royalists are far more likely than the Republicans to grow weakened and worn out by waiting, but that the period at which the present form of government will cease to be provisional depends solely, so far as human foresight can predict events, on the renewal of the Chamber.

If these views should turn out to be correct, France has before her three periods of a distinct nature. The first, which is the actual "Provisoire," will cease as soon as new elections have created a Republican majority in the Chamber. The second will show us a definitely-constituted Republic, which will be rapidly torn to pieces by its own supporters, and may end in another Commune far more subversive than its predecessor. The third

will bring about the inevitable reaction which is the product of all excesses, and then we may expect to see another monarch. It must not, however, be imagined that the future will necessarily develop itself after this wise; it may take a variety of other forms which no one can now foretell; but this one seems to-day, subject to what to-morrow may bring forth, to be more probable than any other. This brings us to the curious question, who will be the monarch?

Answers to wild queries such as these can only be based on speculation. There are apparent probabilities which may seem to indicate one result as being more likely than another; but the causes of these probabilities may disappear; new conditions may arise; the Republic itself may last, though that would be in absolute contradiction to what past experience, and the genius of the French nation, and the computation of future chances, seem to promise. Still, we can only take things as they are; we can only make what sailors call a "dead-reckoning," based on wind and drift and current, with no certain elements to guide our calculation. It is only by the balance of probabilities that we can arrive at any opinion whatever; it is by that fluctuating light alone that we can direct our expectations. But though we are almost groping in the dark, we carry a certain sum of knowledge with us: we know that if France does accept another monarch, he can only be the representative of Orléanist, or Legitimist, or Imperialist pretensions. We know—so far, at least, as anything can be laid down as sure—that no new man will have a chance. France will not imitate Greece and Spain, and go begging for a king all over Europe. It is neither

Hohenzollern, nor Savoy, nor Denmark which will supply a candidate. It will not be some new Frenchman, who will scramble to the throne over the heads of his present fellow-subjects; for if that were to be the solution, it would have dawned already, and we should be able to suspect the coming man. Thiers, M'Mahon, or Gambetta are not what France will take; and there is no one else. We relapse, then, forcedly, if the Republic should break down, into the three pre-reigning families. What are their respective prospects?

The Count de Chambord possesses an advantage which in our eyes is a great one, and which even in France is not without some little value; he represents a principle, and he stands to it. But whatever be the moral merit of his position, it cannot be pretended that it enables him to exercise the slightest influence over the mass of the population. The people, as a whole, either mistrust him or do not care about him. He seems to them to impersonate an old-fashioned epoch of their history—to correspond to no modern wants—to represent no actual necessities. Personally he is almost unknown. He has not, like the Orléans Princes, the reputation of a gallant soldier; he has not, like the late Emperor, the right to say that he has already given France material prosperity. His name awakens no sentiment in this generation, for Divine Right has become an ancient dream to a race which cares only for practical satisfactions.

The Count de Paris, while his cousin lives, must rest his claim on popular preference alone; he can invoke no other argument in favour of his pretensions. Louis Philippe was content to reign on that one condition; his grandson cannot escape from its inheritance; unless,

indeed, he abdicates in favour of the chief of his house, and publicly declares that he will not accept the crown while the Count de Chambord is alive. Thus far he has made no sign in that direction, and it is easy to understand that his uncles use all their influence with him to prevent his taking a step which would virtually be a repudiation of their own father's elevation to the throne forty-two years ago. The Count de Paris seems therefore to be condemned to support the consequences of a false position which he did not create, and to either stand aside until he shall become the direct heir of all the Bourbons, or to accept the verdict of universal suffrage, which is the negation of Legitimacy and the invention of a Napoleon.

The ex-Emperor can appeal to nothing but the recollection of the order which existed and of the large profits which were made while he was master, and to the promise that he "will do better next time." A good many people fancy that these two arguments will suffice, some day, to bring him back again. Perhaps they will; but a good many other people assert that it would be an ineffaceable disgrace for France to accept him, and that if ever he returned, he would be assassinated within a week. "The Napoleonic Legend" has been terribly disfigured by the German War; "the heir of victory, the man of fate," has indeed lost his prestige of twenty years ago, and it is difficult to conceive how he is to regain the moral ascendancy without which men cannot reign. To the old hates which date from the *coup d'état* are added the intense disgusts, the mortal rancours, which the defeat of France has raised. There may be, indeed there is, injustice in the bitter loathing which the very name of Buonaparte provokes to-day in so many hearts;

there is exaggeration in the blame ; there is folly in the imputation to one single man of the errors which a whole nation shared ; but whatever be the arguments on the other side, the feeling against the Emperor is indisputable and almost universal. And yet that feeling, violent as it is, may suddenly disappear ; one of those incomprehensible reactions which occur in popular opinion may spring up in France, and the prospect of to-day may be the elected sovereign of to-morrow. It is impossible to imagine how so apparently impossible a result is to be brought about, but still there floats in the air an indefinable vague impression that the Empire will come back. How, or when, or why, no one can suggest ; but, at the bottom of their hearts, the mass of Frenchmen, despite their rage, hide a secret fancy that that will be the end. If the failure of the Republic should force France to select another form of government, it is perhaps more probable that the Elysée will lodge Napoleon than either of his rivals ; but he would indeed be a cunning man who could now predict the means by which he is to get there.

Meanwhile, pending the solution of these complicated questions, the place is occupied by M. Adolphe

Thiers ; and as it is impossible to determine what another might have effected in his stead, it is fair to own that he has not managed badly. His faults are palpable ; his querulous, aggressive vanity offends even his best friends ; his obstinate Protectionism alienates the goodwill of England, and leads him to the denunciation of the commercial treaties ; he governs in defiance of all known principles of relationship between President and Chamber ; his all-absorbing ambition to be at last looked upon as a real general, prompts him to brag madly about "his" army, and thereby arouse the bitterest mistrust in Germany ;—but, with all these mistakes, and many others too, he has done great things for France. He took her in hand when she was very ill, and though he has not found remedies for her organic diseases, he has, at all events, diminished some of their gravest symptoms, and has cured the greater part of the subsidiary complications which sprang up during the acute period through which the country has had to pass. His name will occupy a place in history ; and when the littleness and the petty struggles of to-day have faded in the distance, posterity will probably accord to him the title of an able governor and a great citizen.

STATESMEN IN AND OUT OF PARLIAMENT.

THOUGHT of the Gladstone Ministry has recalled an old epigram and the lady of whom it was said that there was no living with her or without her. Although the business of the country is becoming day by day more embarrassed for lack of wise management, we cannot conveniently dispense with the authors of our difficulties. The sentence of the nation seems to have been determined on, but the pronouncing of the judgment is deferred. It is not for Ministers' sakes, nor because they are indispensable to our well-being that they remain Ministers, but because they have involved us in such a labyrinth of blunders that nobody at the present moment can see a way out, and the inevitable perplexities may more justly fall to them than to others. The continued possession of office will hardly be represented as a mark of confidence by their most bigoted adherent. Opinion has ripened very rapidly of late. Section after section of the community has been obliged to relinquish its belief in our pretentious rulers; and there can be but few who have not come round to our opinion that Mr Gladstone is a failure. The evidence by which this is proved is, however, by no means agreeable to us. If we think the Minister may have only his well-earned reward, we cannot but grieve to see the office subjected to degradation through the indiscretion of the holder. When we heard of the insults which had been aimed at Mr Gladstone by the delegates forming the committee for conducting the opposition to the Government Parks Bill, we felt humiliated by the knowledge that the First Minister of the Crown could have laid himself open to such coarse and cowardly inso-

lence. The incident has been pitilessly commented on in the 'Saturday Review,' and we will not chafe the sore; but we fear greatly that as the unnatural schism increases between Mr Gladstone and his own flesh and blood, scandals may occur calculated to bring all authority into contempt. Where consanguinity is so extensive it is impossible that a family buck-basket can suffice for the tribe, so some of the washing must be put out, to the great detriment of public decency. Thus it is impossible to throw a screen over the dirty linen; yet we would fain, if we cannot make the Minister respect himself, see his office protected from the open outrage of the mob. It may be that this last attention of Mr Guedalla and his rout will awaken Mr Gladstone to a sense of the pollution which one contracts by descending into the gutter. For aught we know, the illusion that this is a decent or a profitable feat may already be clearing away from the Premier's eyes, and we can imagine him addressing, in Trinculo's vein, some one of his more favoured satellites, "Beales, I do smell all ammonia, at which my nose is in great indignation." And then to think that this is only the beginning of the family jars—that hundreds of ambitious souls, fired by having heard Mr Guedalla receive the thanks of the committee, will seek to win similar honour by similar means. To think of what Mr Gladstone, the fastidious scholar, the man of refinement, the "clear spirit" to whom admiration is as the breath of his nostrils, may have to suffer in sight, in hearing, in sentiments, when the lawless and the vile, with whom he has cast in his lot, shall be prompt to afflict him! We are "wae to

think upon yon" indignities, e'en for his sake. O Plebs, difficult but not inscrutable Plebs! from how many chilled hearts has thy fickleness wrung tears of blood! On how many devoted suitors hast thou, after accepting their gushing compliments and professions, turned in fierce wrath and in demonstrative vulgar scorn! How many who thought they had penetrated too near thy heart, hast thou, not altogether undiscerning or unrighteous, made wise and miserable in a moment by thy sudden caprice!

"Thou many-headed, monster thing,
Oh, who would wish to be thy king?"

or thy William?

In presence of the blunders, inconsistencies, divisions, confusions, and neglects with which we are afflicted inwardly in our domestic affairs, and outwardly in our foreign relations, it is sad to reflect on what Mr Gladstone might have been to us if he had understood his vocation. It is written of the great Cardinal de Richelieu that he cared for no man's opinion as to his ability in statecraft, knowing full well how he excelled therein; but that he listened nervously to criticisms on his poems, having a great desire to excel in that art also, but being doubtful of his achievements. In like manner, Mr Gladstone, if he had been content to remain a student and confessedly (as he is in reality) *imperitus rerum*, might have had a mind at ease as to his power and attainments; but he would fain be a statesman, and hence the irritations and mortifications by which he is daily exercised. Incontinence of speech has been his curse. There seems to be a proneness in human nature greatly to overrate the power of talking glibly on all manner of subjects; a proneness, that is, to accept the talker not only for what he is, but for what he is not; not

only as an expositor, but as a person able to act as discreetly, firmly, and promptly as he can speak forcibly and agreeably. Neither is it the hearers only who are apt to make this mistake. The eloquent man himself, soon persuaded of his abilities, may think that they would lead him to success in any line to which he may choose to direct them. From this cause come mismanagement, vacillation, timid action, complications, quarrels; for from this cause it is that mere talking-men are allowed to lay hands upon the helms of States. A statesman, properly so called, is, in a free country, made greatly more efficient by being able to speak well; but talking is not his primary qualification. We repeat, then, that we think his gift of speaking has been a curse to Mr Gladstone. Let a reader who may think otherwise just consider whether, if Mr Gladstone had been without this gift, it was possible for any person to have imagined him eligible for the business of a statesman—of a leading statesman! Surely not; for Mr Gladstone, his book-learning notwithstanding, is more unacquainted than the generality of us with the people whom he aspires to govern. He has lived always in a world of his own, wherein such things only are recognised as are agreeable to his own theories, and where things which are abominations to him, are as though they were not. He regards the world in which we live quite differently from the great majority of its inhabitants; and consequently, he is for ever running counter to their ideas and wishes, and incurring their censure and dislike. Mr Gladstone is in a false position, and unfortunately it is in this false position that he generally comes under our observation. We have every wish to do justice to his talents, his industry, and to a desire which he is said to feel of

regenerating the world after some pattern or other (and a mighty queer world his *rifacimento* would be); but as a Minister, and a most unsuccessful and misguided one, we must do justice to him also. To see him, Actæon-like, beset by the hounds to whom he has made himself cheap, is most painful to us, notwithstanding that it fulfils our expectation; and we would gladly join, as we think would every true Conservative, in shielding the Minister from these indignities, and in legislating for the repression of their authors, if only the Minister would show proper respect for himself and his office, and treat the dregs of society as they deserve to be treated.

It can be no comfort to Mr Gladstone, amid his perplexities, to hear that his native county, which he stumped to such little purpose three and a half years since, has opened her arms cordially to his rival. The 'Times,' always anxious to detract from an achievement of Mr Disraeli's, has commented crabbedly on this honour done to the "chief of the weakest Opposition which the country has known for many years"—the meaning of this disparaging language appearing to be, that whatever eccentricity Lancashire may indulge in, none need expect to see a Conservative majority in the House of Commons. At the present moment it would no doubt be difficult for Mr Disraeli to lead a majority of the House, except on some question of extraordinary interest; but the 'Times,' when in another mood, would tell us that Parliamentary majorities are mere nought unless supported by the goodwill of the people, the only true source of power. Viewed by the light of this maxim, Mr Disraeli's reception in Manchester is of very great significance indeed. It is one of a vast number of indications that the country is tired of its

present rulers. We have not yet arrived at petitions pouring in from all sides against her Majesty's advisers, nor at a general excitement; but the people will certainly not continue silent once the Alabama entanglement shall be seen to approach solution. We doubt whether the 'Times,' notwithstanding its tall talk, would relish an appeal to the constituencies; on our side, we could throw ourselves upon the country with the greatest confidence. How, then, can the Opposition be exceptionally weak? It is the Government who, with all their following in the House, are really weak and halting, and whose retention of power becomes daily more and more precarious. That the Administration has been wrecked by its own incapacity and folly, rather than by attacks of the Conservative party, we are ready to admit; but we assert that its self-destruction was a thing easy to foresee, and that it would have been highly inexpedient to waste powder and shot upon it when the end could be better attained by giving it plenty of rope. We do not, however, see how this policy can be thought to indicate weakness, unless, as perhaps the 'Times' believes, continued noise and demonstration are necessary to real strength. No Opposition was ever more forbearing than the present Opposition has been—that is true; but it is also true that to no Opposition did the popular mind ever in so short a time, and with such hearty will, return. The weakness of which the 'Times' is so contemptuous is a weakness which it would be delighted to secure for its untoward clients, who lead it into such a wilderness of inconsistency and tax its ingenuity so much—one day drawing from it the gravest apprehensions as to the perils into which the nation is being led, and the next extract-

ing an opinion that any other Ministers than the present are not to be thought of. If the 'Times' wants evidence as to which party is really weak, we would simply refer it to its own leaders, where proofs of a ruinous policy being pursued are but feebly counteracted by transparent attempts at "bolstering up," or by pointless sneers at the Opposition.

Again, the 'Times' decrees itself a triumph, because, except in regard to sanitary matters (not an unimportant subject by the way) it can detect promise of nothing sensational in the Conservative programme as announced by Mr Disraeli. This is nesting season, and the 'Times,' early afield, seems to have stumbled upon a palpable discovery. Let those who trust in the 'Times' make much of the unusual ingenuity. But those who know what Conservatism means, know that we do not deal in earthquakes and volcanoes; that our vocation is to control and guide the furious powers, not to rouse them and let them loose regardless of the wreck and ruin they may cause, so they but serve our temporary, factional ends. We do not promise a pyrotechnic demolition of a Church, or a raid upon property, or a grand international muddle which shall excite apprehension to the highest pitch. We have nothing of this thrilling character; we do not even advertise cheap efficiency, conversion to the opinions of Mr Bradlaugh, or a possible precipitation, "for many good reasons," of our enlightened supporters on the railings of Hyde Park. Our policy, as is well known, is not, and never has been, sensational. And yet we have a very clear, intelligible duty to perform. In those countries where houses are for the most part built of wood, it frequently happens that, through some atmospheric or vol-

canic disturbance, a man's habitation is seen with all its joints oblique, its props and pillars at a dangerous angle with the vertical, its centre of gravity overhanging its base, and its fall prevented only by the hold of the uprights in the ground. If, in such a state of things, there be persons who first bring up shores and braces to prevent the wreck from going further, and who then, by a judicious application of counter-force, succeed in restoring equilibrium in the edifice, no intelligence can be so dull (unless there chance to be a special correspondent of the 'Times' at the place) as not to recognise the value of the service so rendered. Now it is precisely similar service which the Conservative party renders to the State. Wild forces breaking loose, or set loose by reckless hands, rudely undermine or press upon the edifice, which, strained out of the perpendicular, maintains its integrity by only the hold which fortunately its foundations have in the soil. The Conservative party are they who, knowing the dangers that lie hid in popular excitement and *émeutes*, prevent these if they can; who, if prevention be impossible, adjust and steady the fabric once more after it has been bent and shaken. Conservative work during the last three years has been to prevent the mad destruction of a Protestant Church; to stave off anarchy in Ireland; to uphold the rights and the honour of England against the aggressions of foreign powers; to maintain the Royal Family on the throne; to keep down communism; and to hold the empire together. Prevention has been, to a great extent, impossible, so violent was the assault upon everything established; but now that the people is calm again, and beginning to survey the wreck with some feeling of astonishment

and remorse, it will be the duty of the Conservatives to cure the mischiefs which a Liberal Government could create but could not control. In the name of all that is reasonable, will it not be a programme large enough, and distinct enough, if the Conservatives set themselves to salve the wounds which Mr Gladstone's Government has inflicted on the Commonwealth? Nay, 'twere immortal honour to him who should be able only to unravel that last idiotical web, the American Treaty; and if to the back of this an effectual check can be given to Home Rule, to Irish lawlessness, to English Republicanism, to Communism, and to irreligion, is there not goodly work toward? Programme, quotha! Count up the crimes and blunders of the Radical Administration if the list be not too much for patience:—prerogative, law-breaking, fatal incompetency in the Admiralty, toleration of the seditious and worthless, fatuous mismanagement of foreign affairs, and the long tale of troubles to which we have at length become alive—and read in the alleviation of these the appointed work of the Conservative party. Let it be remembered that that party, though it would be ready to take office at the country's call, and with proper assurance of support, makes no bid for office as the remuneration for any service which it may perform. In office or in opposition its endeavours will be the same—namely, to annul or modify the very serious evils which are at this moment threatening us from various quarters. Mr Disraeli said at Manchester something worthy of repetition on this head. It was this:—

"Our opponents assure us that the Conservative party have no political programme (cheers); and, therefore, they must look with much satisfaction to one whom you honour to-night by

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considering him the leader and representative of your opinions when he comes forward, at your invitation, to express to you what that programme is. (Cheers.) The Conservative party are accused of having no programme of policy. If by a programme is meant a plan to despoil Churches and plunder landlords, I admit we have no programme. (Hear, hear.) If by a programme is meant a policy which assails or menaces every institution and every interest, every class and every calling in the country, I admit we have no programme. But if to have a policy with distinct ends, and these such as most deeply interest the great body of the nation, be a becoming programme for a political party, then, I contend, we have an adequate programme, and one which, here or elsewhere, I shall always be prepared to assert and to vindicate. (Cheers.) Gentlemen, the programme of the Conservative party is to maintain the Constitution of the country. (Cheers.)"

Further on in his speech the right hon. gentleman commented in a strain that will now be responded to by the country, on the policy and acts of the present Administration, which no doubt has a programme:—

"Gentlemen, I cannot pretend that our position, either at home or abroad, is, in my opinion, satisfactory. (Hear, hear.) At home, at a period of immense prosperity, with a people contented and naturally loyal, we find to our surprise the most extravagant doctrines professed, and the fundamental principles of our most valuable institutions impugned, and that too by persons of some authority. (Hear, hear.) Gentlemen, this startling inconsistency is accounted for, in my mind, by the circumstances under which the present Administration was formed. It is the first instance in my knowledge of a British Administration being avowedly formed on a principle of violence. . . . You remember when you were informed that the policy to secure the prosperity of Ireland and the contentment of Irishmen was a policy of sacrilege and confiscation. (Cheers.)"

He then gave a short sketch of the history of Fenianism, and in

connection therewith eulogised the zeal and ability of the lamented Lord Mayo, taking the opportunity to remind his hearers that the constituencies were appealed to, to vote against the Government which had made so unfit an appointment as that of Lord Mayo to the Viceroyalty of India! The Fenian conspiracy was, we know, put down by Lord Derby's Government; and we now learn from Mr Disraeli that the policy which that Government would have pursued toward Ireland was a policy which should largely develop Ireland's material resources. There were also one or two other subjects of a different character which the Conservative Government would have endeavoured to settle for Ireland if it had remained in office:—

"But," continued Mr Disraeli, "we were destined to quit it, and we quitted it without a murmur. (Cheers.) The policy of our successors was different. Their specific was to despoil Churches and to plunder landlords (hear, hear); and what has been the result? Sedition rampant (hear, hear), treason thinly veiled (cheers), and whenever a vacancy occurs in the representation, a candidate is returned pledged to the disruption of the realm. (Hear, hear.) Her Majesty's new Ministers proceeded in their career like a body of men under the influence of some delirious drug. Not satiated with the spoliation and anarchy of Ireland, they began to attack every institution and every interest, every class and calling in the country. (Hear, hear.)"

It is impossible for us to follow the right honourable gentleman through his comprehensive speech, which left unnoticed hardly any topic which is at present of interest. He made it apparent that the policy of the Conservative party, in or out of office, is the very reverse of the policy of the Government; and that the aim of that party is to bring about a state of things as unlike as

possible to the sad entanglements and difficulties in which we find ourselves at present. We cannot, however, omit an expression of satisfaction at Mr Disraeli's remarks upon the Dissenters' attack on the Education Act, and the well-deserved praise which he bestowed on the educational efforts of the clergy and members of the Established Church, as his observations on this head harmonise entirely with what we wrote on the same subject last month. Neither can we pass over two remarkable statements worthy the very best attention of a country desirous of remaining in a condition of honourable peace. One is that the Crimean War would certainly never have happened if Lord Derby had remained in office in 1852; the other is, that if our Ministers had held to the declaration which in the first instance they instructed Mr Odo Russell to make to Prince Bismark at the end of 1870, the Russian Government was prepared to withdraw from the position which it had rashly taken. The Crimean War and our humiliation eighteen months ago are things past praying against now; but it is not too late to learn a lesson as to the results which bungling and cowardly governments are pretty sure to bring us to—viz., national calamity and national dishonour. There is yet one other topic in Mr Disraeli's address which we are fain to mention, because the reading of his remarks thereon gratified us much. He thought, in the first instance, that Ministers were right in sending a Commission to Washington to negotiate the Treaty. He now thinks that the despatch of the Commission was a mistake, concurring with Lord Derby, who condemned that proceeding on the day of the opening of Parliament. As we, from the first, regarded the same proceeding as most ill-advised,

it is of course agreeable to us to find that statesmen of such mark as Lord Derby and Mr Disraeli both entertain the same opinion of it that we do. It was right to wish that the Americans might draw towards a settlement of the difference as cordially and kindly as this country did ; but it was weak and childish in the highest degree to put aside all proper reserve, and throw ourselves on their breasts, on the presumption that they were certain to reciprocate the gushing impulse. As yet, we fear, there is like to be no gushing in that part of the world, except of tobacco juice, which is not what Mr Gladstone's soul is athirst for ; but it is no light thing that our remonstrances, in regard to this question of damages, have been received with patience and soberly considered.

We have risen from perusal of Mr Disraeli's Manchester speeches with a strong wish that he may some day have an opportunity of putting his principles into practice, fortified by a large majority of the House of Commons at his back. Hitherto we have seen him always restricted to defensive warfare by reason of the overwhelming strength of his adversaries. After so much constancy as he has displayed, it would be but a reasonable gift of the gods if they should grant him the chance of carrying out unshackled the plans which may be formed in his mind. His rival has had his chance, and failed miserably : now we should like to see what sort of Government we may get from the Conservative party "going free."

The resentment this year of the House of Commons against the pranks of Mr Lowe in 1871 is somewhat remarkable. Generally speaking that body, when it gets from the Chancellor of the Exchequer treatment which contents it,

is wonderfully ready to acknowledge obligation and to applaud. But the remission of the twopence this Easter has not been signalised by exuberant gratitude or by a blotting out of the old score ; rather the reception of the boon was ungracious, and there was an evident desire to examine the horse's mouth. This is referable, probably, to the manner in which it seemed good to Mr Gladstone and Mr Lowe to afflict us with the aggravated Income-tax last year. Because the House would not away with the "*ex luce lucellum*" abortion, it was punished by Income-tax ; at least that was the way in which Ministers managed to have the infliction of the tax regarded. This appearance of chastisement it was which rankled this year in the minds of the people and of their representatives, and led to the sulky acceptance of the remission. Though submitted to for the moment, this discipline, like many another mistake of the Ministry, has borne bitter fruit after a lapse of time. The lightening of the burden did not produce a gay, unreflecting gratitude, with an oblivion of all bygones, but a carping suspicion that there had been no need of an increase last year. Thus it is that we see the influence of Ministers continually decreased by their injudicious proceedings. Lucky it is for Mr Lowe that the prosperity of the country has enabled him to reduce the Income-tax without asking an equivalent.

We have been informed now what the estimates for the year are, and how the money is to be raised ; but we are not at all enlightened as to how certain expenses announced by the Minister for War are to be provided for. Drill-grounds and militia barracks will be obtained by a special loan ; but whence are to come the cost of the increased staff, the movements of the troops into

their new quarters, and the transport and supply establishments which the new arrangement will necessitate? Where, too, are we to find provision made for the promotions in the Royal Artillery and Royal Engineers promised by Mr Cardwell? The proper place for these provisions to appear in would be, of course, the Army Estimates. But these Estimates show the numbers of each grade of officers in the Ordnance Corps to be for 1872-3 the same as for 1871-2. If the required sum has been inserted in a lump, or in some mysterious manner so as to be included in the gross of the Estimate, but not shown in detail, then the Estimates have not been fairly prepared for submission to Parliament. If, for example, it be intended to introduce a certain number of substantive majors into these corps, the rank and the number of officers who are to enjoy that rank should be shown in the details of each corps with the cost against the name. But nothing of the sort is to be found in the document. Is it possible that Mr Cardwell does not propose to make the promotions this year at all, but has only put forward the promise of them to make his statement more palatable, and to commit Parliament to an increased expense next year while boasting of a saving in the present year? There is something very unsatisfactory about this matter. The Estimates for the year and the Minister's speech contradict one another, and some persons undoubtedly have reason to complain. If it be intended to lay upon the country additional expense, that expense ought to have been shown in its proper place in the Army Estimates; if no such expense be contemplated this year, then the expectations of very many officers have been raised only to be bitterly disappointed. It is to be hoped that

this point will be investigated during the passage of the Estimates, and that Mr Cardwell, whose plans for reorganisation were very well received, will be able to show that they are as sincere as they are plausible.

It is most desirable also that, while the Army Estimates are under consideration, due attention should be given to a Constitutional point raised by Mr Disraeli in his speech at Manchester. In our anxiety to fill the ranks of the Army readily, and to reduce the expense of it, we would seem to have paid too little attention to things which in old days would have been of the first consideration. Mr Disraeli said,—

“It was a first principle not to concentrate in the island any overwhelming number of troops, and a considerable portion was distributed in the Colonies. Care was taken that the troops generally should be officered by a class of men deeply interested in the property and the liberties of England. (Hear.) So extreme was the jealousy, that the relations between that once Constitutional force, the Militia, and the Sovereign were rigidly guarded, and it was carefully placed under local influences. All this is changed. We have a standing army of large amount, quartered and brigaded, and encamped permanently in England, and fed by a considerable and constantly increasing reserve. It will in due time be officered by a class of men eminently scientific, but with no relations necessarily with society; while the Militia is withdrawn from all local influences, and placed under the immediate command of the Secretary of War. (Hear, hear.) Thus, in the nineteenth century, we have a large standing army established in England, contrary to all the traditions of the land, and that by a Liberal Government and with the warm acclamations of the Liberal party.”

There is no doubt that the change which we propose to make in respect of the regular troops and the Militia, however much it may have

been pressed upon us by the necessities of recruiting and of finance, will throw an unprecedented military power into the hands of the Minister; who, if secure of a majority in the House of Commons, might use such power to the great prejudice of our liberties. For ages past no Minister has attempted to do anything of the kind, because the means were not at his disposal. But if we restore to him the means, who is to assure us that he will not use them? No man pulls down an embankment under the idea that the waters which it has restrained for two or three hundred years have forgotten in that time how to inundate. Grave questions like this do not, it is true, present themselves as soon as an important change of policy is proposed, but we are the more beholden to those statesmen whose watchful prevision discovers the remote as well as the immediate effects. It is plain that the reorganisation of the forces is a business which should be very cautiously proceeded with.

A matter of detail belonging to the reorganisation has caused the Government once more to appear captious and inconsiderate for a very inadequate object. Some twenty lieutenants and ensigns of the Guards who accepted their commissions last October "subject to any changes which may hereafter be made in the Regulations of the Service in respect to pay or otherwise," find now that these commissions are to be taken from them, that they will hold for a time probationary appointments only, and that after going through a course of instruction at Sandhurst they will be commissioned as ensigns. The proviso under which they took service in the Army said no word concerning rank; and whatever else it may have been

presumed to reach, it could not, one would think, reach the commissions themselves, which it is now the intention of Mr Cardwell to take from them. The Government has, it appears, fortified itself to do this iniquity by a legal opinion; but it will, we trust, require more than a legal opinion to induce the Legislature to suffer such wanton wrong to be perpetrated. The officers alluded to are already lieutenants in the Army. To reduce them to be probationers, with the hope of eventually becoming ensigns, will be to degrade them. These officers, surely, being already commissioned, may be allowed to escape (so far as their commissions are in question) the retrospective action of the warrant for regulating promotion in the Foot-Guards. Any regulation concerning their pay they are bound by the terms of appointment to submit to; but it can be no conceivable gain to any one that they should be deprived of their rank, while to them such deprivation will be a grievous disappointment and injustice. The obstinacy with which former unjust and illegal acts have been persisted in by the present Government leaves little ground for hoping that this harsh measure will be abandoned; we trust, however, that Parliament may see fit to insist on the commissions being held inviolate.

The reappearance of Mr Bright in the House of Commons, and not upon the Government benches, is an interesting event. The right hon. gentleman, who is, we believe, thoroughly sincere and consistent, cannot even appear to sanction an amount of public expenditure which we have it on his own word that he does not approve. We fancy, too, that he has sagacity enough to keep him from embarking in a sinking ship. It would verily be courting failure if Mr Bright, who is

by good fortune clear of the great American entanglement, and of the financial and administrative blunders of last year, should accept responsibility for these, as well as for an expenditure of over 70 millions, by casting in his lot with the floundering Administration. On the other hand, though he is free from the failures of the Cabinet, yet fortune has not provided a very good opening for Mr Bright just now. The people, we should say, are as little in the mood to respond to inflammatory addresses, or to father all the ills which can be found in the world upon the aristocracy, as they well can be. Mr Fowler's abortive attempt in the House of Commons to procure a condemnation of the law of Entail and strict settlement of land, showed that the country is at present not at all disposed to make raids upon classes. The result of the discussion on the Land question was a fair and dispassionate one, both in and out of Parliament, and the law and the landlords were acquitted of all blame in respect of such obstacles as may exist to prevent cultivation from reaching its highest degree of improvement. Not long ago it would have been easy to excite a rage against landlords or any other holders of property; but that cannot be done now, thanks, perhaps, to Mr Bright and the Gladstone Government, who have disgusted everybody with demagogue-ism. The people seem quite able to think and act for themselves, and not to require the aid of a middleman or agitator who is to give them ideas, and to make his profit out of their requirements. Altogether we should think that no plan could be more convenient for Mr Bright than that which he has been compelled to adopt, namely, that of remaining an invalid M.P., showing himself occasionally, but

keeping clear of all exciting subjects and occasions; for Mr Bright would scarcely like to preach a crusade against his late colleagues, and they are the only persons who could now be assailed from the stump with any success.

Since we made the remarks at the beginning of this paper concerning Mr Guedalla's offensive behaviour to the Prime Minister, we learn with regret that the rabble's threats have prevailed with Mr Gladstone, who now intends to leave the four principal Royal Parks of London at the service of mobs, subject only to some few regulations intended to prevent rival mobs from blustering in the same park at the same time. It seems never to have occurred to the Minister that if he would be quit of the annoyances of these so-called delegates he has only one course to pursue—i.e., resolutely to resist this, as we are instructed to resist other evil influences, which, if resisted, will flee. There is no such thing as subordinating these delegates by any other means, nor as satisfying them by any means. Their recent success in bullying the Government is not likely to make them less exacting, and Mr Gladstone may lay his account with hearing more of them before long. How much he will bear before he will withstand the *canaille* it is difficult to calculate, as he evidently rather likes to be despised and insulted by persons of this class; but be his capacity for suffering what it may, the delegates are sure to try it beyond what it will bear, and then the struggle must come. The Government will fight on none the more favourable field or terms for having retreated so many times: they had much better have turned and faced their tormentors at the first. Had the least firmness been shown concerning this Bill for the regulation of Royal

Parks and Gardens, Ministers might have carried their measure, with the aid of the Conservative party, by a very large majority. But the Bill which they at first introduced has been, by one disgraceful concession after another, transformed out of knowledge; and it is now in effect the Bill, not of the Government, but of the mob, which by intimidating Ministers has virtually moulded the Bill. We are curious to see what Mr Guedalla's next demand upon Mr Gladstone may be.

Mr Disraeli's hint that petitions should be presented against the Burials Bill, has been acted upon in many parts of the kingdom; but we hope to see the opposition strengthened by the petitions of a great many more constituencies. It is of the greatest importance that this Bill should not become law. Such a law would in fact be an act of Disestablishment. It would deprive the incumbent of that control over the Church precincts which has hitherto been his right; and it would convert the immediate neighbourhood of the Church itself into a piece of common land at everybody's disposal, whether his intents might be "wicked or charitable." We should like very much to know what any of the Dissenting bodies would say if it were proposed to seize upon the ground immediately surrounding their places of worship, and to give the public a right of entrance thereto, so that under any pretence whatever the ways might be impeded, or the worship disturbed, or the rights of the Dissenting body interfered with. They would say, probably, that their body owned these precincts, which it had acquired by purchase or by gift, and that none could, without violation of the first principles of right, take from them the usual proprietors' powers which they exercise through their trustees. Why a similar answer should not

satisfy any who may call in question the rights of the Establishment we are quite unable to perceive. The churchyards and glebelands of the Church of England have all been acquired by purchase or gift, are the property—the birth-right—of the members of the Church, and the rector or incumbent has been appointed to exercise the owners' rights under certain regulations. Why should the property of the Establishment be the only property acquired for sacred uses which the law will refuse to secure to its owners? The churchyards, should the Burials Bill pass into act, will be outlawed, if that expression be applicable to land. Up to this point the Dissenters' action has been confined to the legalising of certain acts done by themselves or their ministers, so that they might, if they chose, wholly withdraw from, or dispense with, the use of Church property; but this is the first attempt at intrusion. They either accepted the offices and provisions of the Church according to the Church's rule and practice, or they surrendered altogether their rights in the Church. Now they not only claim to use ecclesiastical property, but they claim to use it each man according to his own idea of propriety. The seizure contemplated is perhaps the most wild and indecent design that has ever been seriously entertained. None would leave the most barren bit of common so utterly unprotected, so entirely no man's charge, as it is proposed to make those enclosures, where for generations the dead have been allowed to repose in solemn tranquillity. It would not be difficult to foresee, even if their designs had not been publicly avowed, that if the Dissenters succeed in intruding into the churchyard, they will not be long before they force their way into the church,

at which stage of their proceedings the Church of England must virtually, if not nominally, cease to exist: for it is impossible that, after such humiliation, its ministry can be maintained according to the present standard, or that its members can any longer regard it as under the protection of the State. A parish church to be at the service of any teacher of any kind of doctrine, like a county hall or the long room in a tavern! Surely we cannot be coming to this.

The month of April, always trying to patients of low vitality, has not been without its effect on our failing and misguided Administration. The Ballot Bill—the corpse which Mr Gladstone passionately embraced—does not appear to have gained any more heat than might have been expected from lying in the right hon. gentleman's bosom, but continues to be what Mr Mantellini called “a demn'd moist, clammy body,” very offensive to most people, and very troublesome to the silly people who have made the attempt to resuscitate it. It has given rise to sundry divisions, which have not been flattering to the influence or the tactics of the Government. An uneasy consciousness that they have entirely lost the even ostensible confidence of the House of Commons, must have frequently risen in Ministerial minds of late. If it was derivable from the petty skirmishes over the details of the Ballot Bill, with what overwhelming force must it have appeared on the morning of the 17th April, when Sir Massey Lopes's resolution for the transference of certain charges from the local rates to the Imperial taxes was preferred, by a majority of 100, to an amendment which Ministers supported! This majority exactly equals that which was at the back of Mr Gladstone for any purpose at the time of the first

assembling of the present Parliament. That was three and a quarter years ago, in which period Mr Gladstone and his colleagues, notwithstanding their grand programme, have contrived to transfer the majority to the other side of the House. The occasion of the defeat was eminently one on which a Minister of any weight and ability would have induced his nominal supporters to follow him, as the object was to cushion a troublesome resolution; and party discipline, if it is to be of any use at all, should be able to keep the way clear for business of Ministers' own choosing. There is much reason to suppose that the Government whip did not or would not know to what a degree his strength had departed. He issued his notices, and evidently thought that he “would shake himself as at other times.” But he was miserably disappointed. The once abject supporters of the Government set whip and rein at defiance. There was a muster of 418 members, but Ministers, voting in a minority of 159, were beaten by a majority of 259. Thus, the unreasoning pledges of personal support on which Mr Gladstone's Government has existed for some time past have at last been scattered to the winds; the late bondmen know the luxury of exercising a free will once more; and, the fetters having been broken, a broad hint is given to the holders of office to prepare for a change.

It will startle some of our readers to be informed of the fact that the amount of money raised in these kingdoms yearly by local rates equals the amount raised by the votes of the House of Commons, if we leave out of the latter amount the interest of the national debt. The product of the rates, and the product of the Imperial duties and taxes (after setting aside the interest), are each equal to about £40,000,000 sterling

per annum. The rates, — *i.e.*, the local taxes, — are raised to provide for the Poor, the Police, Administration of Justice, care of Lunatics, Sanitary expenses, Education, Highways, &c. Now, there is this great difference in the manners of raising these nearly equal amounts : That which goes into the Imperial treasury is raised by law after the closest Parliamentary, and indeed national, scrutiny, to insure that it is necessary, and that it shall be fairly imposed and properly applied ; but about that which finds its way into the county chests there is a universal ignorance, and nobody is bound to afford information concerning it. Again, though the local taxes are made applicable to purposes for the benefit of the whole community, one class of property, — namely, real property, — bears the whole burden of it. Thirdly, the State, although it contributes in a very small proportion to these local rates, yet interferes very often and very materially with the amount and the application of them. The object, then, of Sir Massey Lopes's resolution is to shift part of the burden of the rates from real property, which at present bears nearly all, to real and personal property jointly, by causing part of it to be supplied out of the Imperial taxes ; to invite frequent examinations of these rates by bringing them under the notice of Parliament ; and to make whatever Minister of the Crown may find it his duty to interfere with the services to which these rates are applied, feel his responsibility, through the necessity of his having to ask Parliament for part of the means. The manner of the Minister's accustomed interference may be understood from Sir Massey Lopes's remarks concerning the county police : —

“ He had been told that the magis-

trates had some control over the police, but this was not so in fact. They had power to appoint a chief constable, but when they had appointed him they had no power to remove him, and he could snap his fingers at the whole bench. The magistrates had some slight control over the salaries, but as these had reached the maximum this power of control was gone. The actual controllers were the Government inspectors, than whom there were no more arbitrary class of men. They had only to say the chief constable needed a larger staff, when the Home Office declared the Government grant should be stopped unless they were provided. Such a threat, of course, resulted in compliance, because the county could not do without the Government grant. But the police were now being used for Imperial purposes to a still greater extent than formerly. They were now required to distribute notices to recruits, a novelty and a bad precedent ; but if it were to be followed, there would be good ground for increasing the grant. (Hear, hear.) Last year he had expressed an opinion that it would be better if the Government took the entire control of the police. He was of the same opinion now. If altogether under the Government the police would be more efficient, and would work more harmoniously.”

Ministers, then, had the power of greatly increasing, and almost entirely directing, the expenditure of these local rates ; but the county authorities had to find the money, and were the only bodies responsible. It was clear that responsibility ought to some extent to be shifted ; but then, if Ministers should be made responsible, while the money should still be left in charge of the county justices, there was the opposite danger that the latter, holding the purse, but not being immediately answerable for the expenditure, might become reckless and extravagant. But we will let Sir Massey Lopes say for himself how this difficulty has been foreseen and provided for in his scheme : —

"It might be said that if the Imperial Government acceded to his proposal, there would be no security against wanton and reckless expenditure on the part of those local bodies. There was a good deal in that objection, but inasmuch as he was asking not for the whole, but only for one half of those charges, the local bodies would still have the same inducement as at present to combine economy with efficiency. (Hear, hear.) But there was another side to that argument. Did not the ratepayers want some protection against the wanton and reckless expenditure of the central Government (hear, hear); or rather, did they not want some security against the arbitrary recommendations and requirements of that innumerable army of inspectors and sub-inspectors who were prowling about the country seeking whom they might devour? (Laughter.) He did not say anything against those gentlemen individually, but they all knew they must be fussy and active, and always doing or suggesting something. (Hear, hear, and a laugh.) But if those charges were divided between the local bodies and the central Government, the former would have some guarantee that the latter would not hastily or inconsiderately impose fresh burdens upon them. He was as great an advocate as any man in that House of local self-government, which he regarded as the essence of good government and the palladium of our liberties; and he believed that the calamities which had befallen France originated in undue centralisation. But he asked what real control had the ratepayers over any portion of the expenditure to which he had referred? What fractional phantom of local control over the rates now existed was exercised not by the ratepayers but by the magistrates, who, after all, were only instruments of the legislature, and were obliged to levy rates for matters which did not depend upon their judgment."

An amendment, so ambiguously worded and so indefinite that it was generally ascribed to the Prime Minister, was moved by Sir Thomas Acland, and adopted by the Government. Although Mr Gladstone's paternity was denied, the

argument of this amendment—if it can be said to have had any argument or meaning—was very feebly supported. Mr Stansfeld and Mr Goschen spoke, but produced no favourable effect whatever—perhaps, by exposing the feebleness of their case, only confirmed wavering Liberals in their revolt. Be this as it may, a revolt there certainly was; the first open and general falling away of those much-tried men who were sent to Westminster "to vote for Mr Gladstone." Rebellion, as we well knew, had been smouldering for some time, notwithstanding the outward show of allegiance; but the prerogative blunder of last year, the Collier iniquity, the Megara disaster, and the American complication, were too much. The effect of them is to be read in the division on the "Local Rates Resolution," a matter purely of discipline—for we fancy Mr Gladstone's desire was simply to evade the question: there was a general refusal to fight his battle, and "the weakest opposition that the country has ever known" triumphed by a majority of 100. Now that there has been an open rupture, a little warfare of that not very civilised kind peculiar to advanced Radicals may be expected to enliven the debates. Possibly a miserable threatened existence of a few weeks, embittered by recriminations and revilings, is all that remains now for the Government on this side of signal defeat and general condemnation.

But it is not Mr Gladstone's coming defeat which appears to us to be the most important thing signified by the notable division in the House of Commons. We have long felt assured that the Ministry must break down; and we have made no secret of our belief. Its failure was a necessity independent of the action of opposition; the Cabinet had in it the seeds of mortal disease at

its first construction. No, it is not the humiliation of the Government which is the most interesting matter shown in this debate: it is the calm, judicial frame of mind to which the country is returning; it is the disappearance of the spirit of wild, impatient injustice and of class persecution; it is the recognition by Parliament that the landholders of England are entitled to some consideration from the State, that forms the really gratifying feature of this victory. This is the supplement to the disposal of Mr Fowler's proposal concerning entails and succession to real property. In the latter case, an attack upon the landed interest was easily repelled; in the case before us, a most substantial relief has been secured for the landed interest. It seems to us but a very short time ago that Mr Bright was eliciting the wildest cheers, and filling the air with greasy caps, by announcing that our utterly corrupt aristocracy and squirarchy were not weighted half heavily enough, and that more burdens must be thrown upon the land, so as to relieve the manufacturing and trading interests; or, as he put it, for the benefit of the working classes. What in the world has brought round opinion in such a remarkable manner, it is hard to determine. Our suspicion is that disappointment and disgust at the doings of our present rulers have had a good deal to do in reconvertng our people to their old feelings and to a just consideration. We once knew of a whole family being thrown into consternation by a passion conceived by its heir for a silly doll with bright eyes. All sorts of desperate remedies were suggested — expatriation of the whole family, disinheritance, maternal renunciation, if threats, entreaties, and tears should fail. But the head of the house, little discomposed, arranged

that the youth should spend a whole day uninterruptedly with his enslaver. After that the difficulty vanished, and the heir was perfectly tractable. In like manner a little uninterrupted intimacy with Messrs Bright and Gladstone has more effectually cured the people of their hallucinations than all the arguments and protestations in the world. They know now what government by these pretenders means. They have smarted pretty severely for their silly fancy; and are now, with some remorse, turning their eyes back on those old guides and friends from whom they allowed themselves to be so cunningly seduced.

We observe that the new Licensing Bill is before Parliament. Its reception by the country will hardly be known before our day of publication, but one may without rashness predict that the war which it will rekindle between the fanatics on one side and the brewing and publican interest on the other is likely to embitter the last days of the Government. To cure all the grievances and stop all the clamour under the sun are not such easy achievements as Mr Gladstone thought them three years ago, when, like Absalom, he stood in the gate and said, "Oh that I were made judge in the land, that every man which hath any suit or cause might come unto me and I would do him justice." Mr Gladstone has been made judge in the land; he has destroyed, and perplexed, and disturbed; and he has shaken the Empire to its centre: that is the sum of Mr Gladstone's work. But there is another matter near the hearts of us all, concerning which we must say a few words before we close this paper. Consideration of it has been deferred until we were about to go to press, in the hope that at the last there might be some definite information on which to comment.

Of course we allude to the American complication.

It is instructive to observe how political, like other sins, find the sinners out. Since our last publication we read the comments of an American paper on the prospects of the Alabama difficulty, among which reference was made to the conduct of our Government in regard to the Russian demands of 1870. The Americans were reminded that the first English utterance, by the mouth of Mr Odo Russell, was fierce and uncompromising, but that it soon softened down, like Bottom's roar, to the gentleness of any sucking dove; and England in the end conceded all that Russia asked, or rather insisted on salving her honour with an empty declaration about the inviolability of treaties. The moral which was drawn was, that however strongly and decidedly the Gladstone Government might refuse to go into court while the indirect claims remained on the record, America had only to be firm, and our Cabinet would be sure to give way. Thus the former base conduct of Government is seriously damaging our chances of accommodation in this grave conjuncture. These are the "consequential damages" of showing the white feather on the Black Sea question. There is a stream of mud following the Gladstone Ministry through its whole career, and growing ever wider; every fresh act is tainted not only by its own sediment, but by the grounds and slime of former misadventures.

Another month has now passed away, and we do not seem to be getting nearer to the end of our dispute with America. Precious time lost when the American Case was first received in England has resulted in our having to choose between two evils—viz., first, non-compliance with the terms of the treaty

by which we are bound to present our Counter-case by the 15th April; and, second, the risk of vitiating our position, and becoming in spite of our protest subject to the judgment of the arbitrators by presenting a Counter-case while the claim for indirect damage is still maintained by our opponents. That cannot now be helped, and our Government has chosen, as we all know, to go into court, reserving, or attempting to reserve, our right of yet withdrawing from the arbitration if the claims for indirect damage shall be persisted in. Thus we have submitted ourselves to the judgment of the arbitrators, and in so doing have incurred great risk of having to receive judgment whether the claims for indirect damages shall be withdrawn or not. Run into a corner as we were, it was not easy, we admit, to choose the best course. The Ministry, clinging to the hope that America may yet concede what we require, or that the go-by may in some way or other be given by the Arbitrators to the claims for indirect damages, allow proceedings under the Treaty so far to take their course. The craven feeling of the Government is obvious enough. Fear of opinion at home, which, as the 'Times' says, would not leave them in office for a week if they were to go directly counter to it, prevents their giving up everything as they evidently would if they dared: on the other hand, there is a mortal dread of offending the American Cabinet. "You see how we are situated," they seem to say; "we would give you up the indirect claims or anything else rather than have our Treaty come to nought, only we dare not: please don't be angry if we defer a little, a very little, to the wishes of our own tiresome people."

The terms of Earl Russell's notice of motion for the 22d April (now postponed to the 29th) make it clear

that the timid, faltering proceedings of the Government excite grave apprehension of ultimate damage to this country. The Duke of Richmond, on being informed of the course taken, at once expressed alarm lest the Arbitrators should go on and decide behind our backs ; and the Duke was followed by Lord Westbury, who stated our danger to be as follows :—

“The difficulty is this : the reference contemplates a certain procedure—that is, an original case on either side, followed by a counter-case by way of answer to the case on either side. If, therefore, we now present our counter-case, the American Government may at once come in with their counter-case, and then the pleadings contemplated before the arbitrators will be completed ; the issue will be raised, and the arbitrators may then be required, as being seised of the whole matter, to go on. . . . I cannot say as a lawyer whether that will be so, but it is a thing gravely to be feared, and much to be guarded against. When you protest against the jurisdiction of a judge, and do not permit him to clothe himself with the full extent of jurisdiction, it is most inconvenient, and may be pregnant with the most evil consequences, to take any step of this kind until the question of the extent of jurisdiction is finally decided (hear, hear).”

The Marquis of Salisbury feared that the Government had lost their last chance of protesting against these indirect claims, while he dreaded that a judgment might be given on indirect and direct claims together, so as to make it impossible to distinguish between the awards ; and Lord Denman was certain that no officer in our courts would have drawn up such an order of reference as this Treaty had given us a sample of. End how the matter may, there is no doubt that we are at present in a position of great peril, and that that position is due primarily, of course, to the bungled Treaty, but immediately to the procrastination

and want of decided action in our Cabinet. The country knows well what it wants ; but it cannot get the Ministers of the Crown to do its behest “but with proviso and exception ;” it cannot get them to do it heartily and boldly.

Meanwhile, if the action or inaction of our own Government be likely to wreck us, we receive every now and then a gleam of hope from the other side of the Atlantic. Many an upright mind in the United States is of opinion that the advantage given to that country by our wretched Commissioners has been pushed too far. America has shown plainly enough what we have left it in her power to demand ; but the question for her now is whether, because she possesses a giant's strength (*i. e.*, the power given by the botch of a Treaty), it is expedient for her to use it like a giant. We said two months ago that America had an enviable opportunity, and the idea that such an opportunity is being lost seems to have presented itself to very many American minds. This idea, first propounded to them by their press, and in the letters of influential men, has at length been embodied in a resolution submitted to the House of Representatives at Washington, which resolution, referred to a committee, seems to be finding some favour. We have also telegraphic reports of the Cabinet being less obstinate than at first. Policy would no doubt for every reason dictate withdrawal of the claims objected to, were it not for the belief, which we have before alluded to, in the inconstancy and ultimate submission of the Gladstone Government. It is certain that America will never get these consequential damages, even though they should be awarded ; and it is highly probable that by persisting in the demand for them she may lose the whole damages, destroy all chance of establishing

the settlement of differences by arbitration in this generation, and bring back a worse practice of bickering, recriminating, and quarrelling, than that which the treaty was intended to put an end to.

Most opportune and most satisfactory is this disposition in the Americans to do us justice, and to act according to the spirit rather than the letter of the treaty. If only a quarrel can be avoided now, there is every hope of a future good understanding between the two countries. Unless hostile feelings should be again provoked by this question of damages, the time may never recur in which any and every act or saying of Great Britain can be the theme of each loafer on a stump wherewith to inflame the public mind beyond the reach of reason. It is not a little remarkable that the long-delayed uprising of America against the dishonest cliques known as "rings," and the appearance of a public opinion overruling the howl of the mob as regarded England, were simultaneous. From this may be adduced evidence of the growth of a national mind influenced by thinkers, and strong enough and courageous enough to control ignorant force. Such a growth, if it has begun, is warrant for its own continuance, for it is sure to bring back into the field of politics able and influential men who have been driven from the work of statesmen by utter disgust at the quality of the classes in possession of power. Every accession of this kind must strengthen the rule of mind, and many such accessions would make rowdy dictation to Government impossible. Grieved then as we are that we must again go to press while the anxiety of the country about relations with America remains unrelieved, we observe with satisfaction that the dark cloud which our Government

has dragged us into has a silver lining. Our knowledge of the important change that has taken place in the generation of American opinion might have been long in reaching us if the present misunderstanding had not occurred, and by occurring brought it to light. A right understanding between England and America is of far more importance than the settlement of any particular dispute. It must add enormously to the power of both countries; and if all be true that has been told us regarding the instincts and tendencies of race, there may be in the birth even now a racial influence which will, once more in its history, subjugate the world.

Before concluding, we have the pleasure of noting that the Prime Minister has announced the intention of Government to reconsider the amount that shall be offered by the country to Lady Mayo. We will not inquire how much the beatings in the Commons on the 17th and 18th April had to do with this compliance with the desire of the nation, but rejoice that the point has been conceded without the painful course of bringing the matter into debate—the point of reconsideration, that is; for we have yet to learn to what extent the liberality of the Government may carry them. The pension originally proposed to be awarded to the widow of the late lamented Viceroy of India is considered by all sides inadequate to the occasion, and therefore unworthy of a country like Great Britain. It is fortunately a most rare occurrence that a person of exalted rank falls in so sudden and shocking a manner, while in the execution of his duty. There need be no rule for the amounts of pensions to be granted in such cases; it is matter more of sentiment than of mere obligation,

and public sentiment will not now be satisfied unless a liberal pension from the English Treasury be added to that which has been already voted from the Treasury of India. He would be a discerning man that could explain to us the secret springs of Mr Gladstone's concessions, and of his inexorable decrees. The decision not to augment the pension was, like so many strange resolves of the Ministry, come to for no discoverable purpose, and to the disappointment and chagrin of the whole community. It came with a peculiarly bad grace from the present Ministers, and might have tempted people to say that the bad feelings which caused Lord Mayo to be slandered, at the time of his appointment, by the Government party—the feelings, namely, which created the cruel and unfounded reports of his unfitness for the appointment to which he had been gazetted—were being continued now that he is in his untimely grave, after having so nobly and so entirely refuted all aspersions on his capacity. Mr Gladstone and his colleagues, in determining the amount, should think of this, and reflect that the Ministerial party owe a reparation to Lord Mayo; and that, therefore, any disposition on their part to reduce the mark of honour below what the country is willing to award, shows with a very bad grace. The *'Times,'* commenting on the omission of the Government to make becoming provision, used these words: "It is not too late even now for the Government to repair their error; but if they fail to do so, it will be the duty of the House of Commons to do justice to the public sentiment." Should the Ministerial award be still too small, we trust that the House will do justice as here suggested. England, it is true, has always able and devoted sons ready for her work, whatever that may

be; but their readiness to serve her is probably due to the fact that she has hitherto known how to appreciate their service. We can afford, without doubt, to deal liberally in this instance, and we can *not* afford to make an offering unworthy of the nation.

And apropos of the above mention of beatings, we observe that the Ministry has had another warning in the defeat of an amendment to a clause of the Ballot Bill, which amendment it supported with all its power. We may learn from the terms of this amendment, and from its fate, what a complicated affair secret voting would be, and how alien the whole thing is to the spirit of our people. The promoters of the Bill would allow a voter to lie to any extent as to how he had voted; but would make him a felon if he took the only means in his power of *proving* that he has acted truly according to his opinions. On the other hand, if secrecy be permissive only, the men who resort to it will be always understood to have voted in some manner which they dare not avow. The plan will not work with us. Many in the length and breadth of the land will ask, as Mr Osborne did, whether, after such a defeat, Government think it worth their while to proceed farther with this uncalled-for measure. "Thick and thin" support it is evident that the Government can no longer command; and now that honourable members have recovered the right to vote as they think proper, it is so likely that the corpse-reviving process may be summarily put a stop to, that there is wanton waste in occupying the time of the House with it. We assume, perhaps too hastily, that prerogative will not be called in when the Bill is *in extremis*; but even that danger we think we may defy, now that the House of Commons will no longer

endorse with closed eyes any act of the Minister.

Moreover, we have the gratification of learning, before we lay down the pen, that petitions in great number against the Burials Bill have been addressed to the Lower House. It is likely that before what we write can be in the hands of our readers, further interesting events may have occurred, for the political plot seems to be thickening. Happen what may, we do not desire that an opportunity of resigning should be afforded the Government until the constituencies shall have demanded its dismissal. Now that he is in office, the country should be thoroughly convinced of Mr Gladstone's value, or want of value; so that, once done with, he may never, by the offer to commit any destruction whatever, be able to persuade the people to try him again. The Conservative party has now a commanding position, and can prevent violent attacks on things established. Such being the case, they can very well defer seeking

office until the country invites them. They will "work and wait," as Lord Derby advised. The schism in the Radical ranks is not likely to be healed; or, if it is healed, it will be the first instance of a reconciliation in Mr Gladstone's career. As long as the Government party is divided it will be comparatively harmless, and the virtual direction may be with the Opposition. When the session opened not much more than two months since, although there were many charges hanging over Ministers, and the fears and complaints of the country were many and loudly expressed, the Parliamentary party was still well in hand. The first symptom of revolt appeared in the Collier debate, and now, just after the Easter recess, occurs a general rebellion. Should this pace continue, of course the end must be at hand; but it would seem convenient that the expenses and supplies of the year should be voted now without interruption—and an immediate displacement of the Administration is not desired.

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THE MAID OF SKER.—PART XI.

CHAPTER LVII.—MANY WEAK MOMENTS.

NOTHING less than steadfast faith, and an ancient British constitution, can have enabled me to survive this highly-dappled period. It was not in my body only, or legs, or parts I think nothing of, but in my brain that I felt it most, when I had the sense to feel it. And having a brain which has no right to claim exemption from proper work, because of being under average, I happened to take a long time to recover from so many spots striking inwards. An empty-headed man might have laughed at the little drills into his brain-pan; but with me (as with a good bee-hive early in October) there could not be the prick of a brad-awl but went into honey. And so my brain was in a buzz for at least a twelvemonth afterwards.

Therefore I now must tell what happened, rather as it is told to me, than as myself remember it. Only you must not expect such truth, as I always give, while competent.

After the master of the ship Defence had proved so unable to

defend himself, General Sir Philip Bampfylde, with his large and quiet mind forbidding all intrusion, opened out a little of his goodness to Jack Wildman. There are men of the highest station, and of noble intellect, who do this, and cannot help it, when they meet a fellow-man with something in him like them. There is no vanity in it, nor even desire to conciliate; only a little touch of something understood between them. And now being brought so together perhaps by their common kindness, and with the door of death wide open, as it were, before them, the well-born and highly-nurtured baronet, and the lowly, neglected, and ignorant savage, found (perhaps all the more clearly from contrast) something harmonious in each other. At any rate they had a good deal of talk by the side of the lonely river, where even the lighters kept aloof, and hugged to the utmost the opposite shore. And the General, finding much amusement in poor Jack's queer

simplicity, and strange remarks upon men and things, would often relax without losing any of his accustomed dignity. So while they were speaking of death one day, Jack looked at Sir Philip with an air of deep compassion and feeling, and told him with tearful eyes how heartily he was grieved at one thing. Being pressed as to what it was, he answered that it was Sir Philip's wealth.

"Because," said he, "I am sad when I think that you must go to hell, sir."

"I go to hell!" Sir Philip exclaimed, with a good deal of rather unpleasant surprise; "why should I do that, Jack! I never thought that you entertained so bad an opinion of me."

"Your Honour," said Jack, having picked up some of my correct expressions, "it is not me; it is God Almighty. I was told afore ever I learned to read, or ever heard of reading, how it was. And so it is in the Bible now. Poor men go to heaven, rich men go to hell. It must be so to be fair for both."

The General had too much sense to attempt to prove the opposite, and would have thought no more about it, if Jack had dropped the subject. But to do this at the proper moment requires great civilisation; while on the other hand Jack sought comfort, needless to men of refinement.

"Your Honour must go there," he said, with a nod of his head which was meant to settle it; "but there is one of your race, or family"—or whatever word of that sort he employed, for he scarce could have come to any knowledge of things hereditary—"who will go to heaven."

"Many are gone there already—too many," answered Sir Philip, devoutly; "but tell me whom you

mean, Jack. Do you mean my son, the Captain?"

"Him! no, no. I know better than that. It is plain where he must go to."

"Your Captain! you disloyal fellow. Why, you ought to be lashed to the triangles. But who is it you are thinking of?"

"I know, I know," said Jack, nodding his head; and no more could Sir Philip get out of him. And whenever he tried to begin again, Jack Wildman was more than a match for him, by feigning not to understand, or by some other of the many tricks which nature supplies, for self-defence, to the savage against the civilised. If I had been well, I must have shelled this poor Jack's meaning out of him; whereas, on the other hand, but for my illness he might never have spoken. So it came to pass that he was sent, entirely at Sir Philip's cost, and with a handsome gratuity, to rejoin our Captain in Plymouth Sound, and to carry back Cannibals Dick and Joe, who had scoured away at great speed upon hearing of my sudden misfortune.

Now I will tell you a very strange thing, and quite out of my experience; even after small-pox, which enlarged and filled me with charity, as well as what I had scarcely room for—increase of humility. This is, that though Captain Bampfylde had some little spare time at Plymouth, he had such command of himself that he never went near his beloved Isabel. Nothing could have so checked a man of heartiness and bravery, except the strongest power of honour, and a long time of chastisement. There was a lovely young woman, and here a fine though middle-aged man, her husband; they loved one another with heart and soul, and they never met, but through a telescope! It may have

been right, or it may have been wrong—I should have thought it wrong, perhaps, if the case had been my own—but they pledged their honour, and kept it. Drake Bampfylde (like his father) had a strength of trust in Providence. But this trust has no landed security, now that the Lord has found the world so clever, that He need not interfere with it.

The 74-gun ship *Defence* was known to be the fastest sailer in the British Navy; not from her build alone, or balance, but from my careful trim of her sails, and knowledge of how to handle her. Hours and hours I spent aloft, among lifts, and braces, and clue-garnets, marking the draw of every sail, and righting all useless bellying. So that I could now have warranted her the first of our Navy to break the line, if rigged according to my directions, and with me for her master. However (while I lay docked like this, careened I might say, and unlikely ever to carry a keel again), the *Defence*, without my knowledge even, being new-masted, sailed to join the Channel Fleet, with *Heavyside* acting as her master; and as might have been expected, fell to leeward one knot in three. And even worse than this befell her; for in the second of those two miserable actions under Hotham in the year 1795, when even Nelson could do nothing, the *Defence* having now another captain as well as a stupid master, actually backed her mizzen-topsail, in the rear of the enemy, when the signal was to fill and stand on. However, as even that famous ship the *Agamemnon* did nothing that day, through getting no opportunity, we must forgive poor *Heavyside*, especially as he was not captain. But the one who ground his teeth the hardest, and could forgive

nobody, was the Honourable Rodney Bluett, now first lieutenant of the *Defence*. By this time every one must desire to know why Captain Bampfylde was not there, as he might have been, and might have made himself famous, but for his usual ill fortune. This had carried him to the East Indies, before the *Defence* had finished refitting; and there, with none of his old hands near him, he commanded a line-of-battle ship, under Commodore Rainier; and after some hard work, and very fine fighting, drove the brave Dutchmen out of the castle of Trincomalee, in August 1795, which we came to hear of afterwards.

Thus it was that everybody seemed to be scattered everywhere. None of us happened to hold together, except those three poor savages; and they, by a sort of instinct, managed to get over accidents. For they stuck, with that fidelity which is lost by education, to Rodney Bluett, as soon as ever poor Father Davy failed them. But this is a melancholy subject, and must soon be done with.

Let me, then, not dwell upon this visitation of the Lord for a moment longer than the claims of nation and of kin combine to make it needful. Nor did it seem to matter much for a long time what became of me. The very first thing I remember, after months of wandering, has something to do with the hush of waves, and the soft breath of heaven spread over me. Also kind young voices seemed to be murmuring around me, with a dear regard and love, and sense of pretty watchfulness; and the sound of my native tongue as soft as the wool of a nest to my bosom.

Because I was lying in a hammock, slung, by Colonel Lougher's orders, betwixt the very same moor-

ing-posts (at about half-tide in Newton Bay) which truly enabled the sons of Devon to make such a safe job of stealing his rocks. Not only the Colonel but Lady Bluett, who generally led his judgment, felt by this time the pleasure of owing true gratitude to somebody. My fatherly care of the young lieutenant had turned him out so nobly.

It misbecomes me to speak of this; and it misbecame me to speak at all, with the sea-breeze flowing over me, the first words of knowledge that I had spoken for how long I know not. Nothing can be too high, or too low, for human nature at both ends; but I ought to have known better than to do the thing I did.

"Give me a pipe," was all I said; and then I turned away, and cared not whether I got my pipe, or whether the rising tide extinguished me.

"Here is your pipe, sir," came in a beautiful voice from down below me; "and we have the tinder ready. Bunny, let me do it now."

That pipe must have saved my life. Everybody said so. It came and went in curls of comfort through the hollow dying places of my head that had not even blood enough to call for it; and then it never left my soul uneasy about anything. Hammock and all must have gone afloat, with the rapid rise of the spring, except for Colonel Lougher's foresight.

Who was it that watched me so, and would have waited by my side, until the waves were over her? Who was it that kept on listening, to let me know, while I could not speak? Who was it that gave a little bit of a sigh, every now and then, and then breathed hard to smother it? Who was it, or who could it be, in the whole wide world, but Bardie?

Not only this, but when I began

to be up to real sense again, the kindness of every one around me made me fit for nothing. In the weakness of expecting all to take advantage of me (as is done in health and spirits), all the weakness I could find was in my friends and neighbours always labouring to encourage me. This to my mind proves almost the wrongness of expecting people to be worse than we are.

That winter was the most severe, all over Western Europe, known for five-and-fifty years. I well remember the dreadful winter A.D. 1740, when the Severn was frozen with a yard of ice, and the whole of the Bristol Channel blocked with icebergs like great hay-ricks. Twelve people were frozen to death in our parish, and seven were killed through the ice on the sea. The winter of 1795 was nothing to be compared to that; nevertheless it was very furious, and killed more than we could spare of our very oldest inhabitants.

And but for the extraordinary kindness of Colonel Lougher, that winter must have killed not only me in my weak and worn-out condition, but also the poor maid of Sker, if left to encounter the cold in that iceberg. For, truly speaking, the poor old house was nothing else through that winter. The snow in swirling sheets of storm first wrapped it up to the window-sills; and then in a single night overleaped gables, roofs, and chimney-tops. Moxy and Watkin passed a month of bitter cold and darkness, but were lucky enough to have some sheep who kept them warm outside, and warmed their insides afterwards. And after that the thaw came. But all this time there was nobody in my little cottage at Newton but poor Roger Berkrolles, and how he kept soul and body together is known to none save himself and Heaven. For Colo-

nel Lougher and Lady Bluett, at the very beginning of the frost, sent down my old friend, Crumpy the butler, to report upon my condition, and to give his candid opinion what was the best thing to do with me. After that long struggle now (thanks to a fine constitution and the death of the only doctor anywhere on our side of Bridgend), I had begun to look up a little and to know the time of day. Crumpy felt my pulse, and nodded, and then prescribed the only medicine which his own experience in life had ever verified. Port wine, he said, was the only thing to put me on my legs again. And this he laid before the Colonel with such absence of all doubt, that on the very same afternoon a low and slow carriage was sent for me, and I found myself laid in a very snug room, with the firelight dancing in the reflection of the key of the wine-cellar. Also here was Bardie flitting, light as a gnat in spring-time, and Bunny to be had whenever anybody wanted her. Only her scantling and her tonnage unfitted her for frigate-service.

What had a poor old fellow like me—as in weak moments I called myself—ever done, or even suffered, to deserve to find the world an Inn of good Samaritans? I felt that it was all of pure unreasonable kindness; the very thing which a man of spirit cannot bear to put up with. I have felt this often, when our Parson discoursed about our gracious Lord, and all the things He did for us. A man of proper self-respect would like to have had a voice in it.

This, however (as Hezekiah told us in the cockpit, after we had pickled him), might be safely attributed to the force of unregeneracy; while a man who is down in luck, and constitution also, trusts to any stout mortal for a loan of orthodoxy. And so did I to our Rector Lougher,

brother of the Colonel, a gentleman who had bought my fish, and felt my spiritual needs. To him I listened (for well he read), especially a psalm to which I could for ever listen, full of noble navigation, deeper even than our soundings in the Bay of Biscay.

Every night we used to wonder where Lieutenant Bluett was, knowing as we did from my descriptions (when the hob was hot) what it is to be at sea with all the rigging freezing. When the blocks are clogged with ice, and make mysterious groanings, and the shrouds have grown a beard as cold as their own name is, and the deck begins to slip; and all the watch, with ropes to handle, spit upon their palms, and strike them (dancing with their toes the while), one man to another man's, hoping to see sparks come out. So it is, I can assure you, who have never been at sea, when the barbs of icy spray by a freezing wind are driven, like a volley of langrel-shot raking the ship from stem to stern, shrivelling blue cheeks and red noses, shattering quids from the chattering teeth. Many a time in these bitter nights, with the roar of east wind through the fir-trees, and the rattle of doors in the snow-drift, I felt ashamed of my cozy berth, and could not hug my comfort, from thinking of my ancient messmates turned to huddled icicles.

But all was ordained for the best, no doubt: for supposing that I had been at sea through the year 1795, or even 1796, what single general action was there worthy of my presence? It might have been otherwise with me there, and in a leading position. However, even of this I cannot by any means be certain, for seamen quite as brave and skilful were afloat at that very time. However, beyond a few frigate actions, and matters far away from

home, at the Cape, or in the East Indies, I did not hear of anything that I need have longed much to partake in. So that I did not repent of accepting a harbour-appointment at Plymouth, which (upon my partial recovery) was obtained for me by Sir Philip Bampfylde, an old friend of the Port-Admiral there.

For that good Sir Philip was a little uneasy, after shipping me off last autumn, lest he might have behaved with any want of gratitude towards me. Of course he had done nothing of the kind; for in truth I had raved for my country so—as I came to learn long afterwards—that when all the risk of infection was over, the doctor from Barnstaple said that my only chance of recovering reason lay in the air of my native land. But at any rate this kind baronet thought himself bound to come and look after me, in the spring of the year when the buds were awake, and the iron was gone from the soul of the earth again. He had often promised that fine old tyrant Anthony Stew to revisit him; so now he resolved to kill two birds with one stone, as the saying is.

I had returned to my cottage now, but being still very frail and stupid, in spite of port wine every day, I could not keep the tears from starting, when this good and great landowner bent his silver head beneath my humble lintel, and forbade me in his calm majestic manner to think for a moment of dousing my pipe. And even Justice Stew, who of course took good care to come after him, did not use an uncivil word, when he saw what Sir Philip thought of me.

"Sir," said the General to the Squire, after shaking hands most kindly with me, "this is a man whom I truly respect. There seems to be but one opinion about him. I

call him a noble specimen of your fellow-countrymen."

"Yes, to be sure," answered Anthony Stew: "but my noble fellow-countrymen say that I am an Irishman."

"No doubt whatever about that, your Worship," was the proper thing for me to reply; but the condition of my head forbade me almost to shake it. If it had pleased the Lord to give me only a dozen holes and scars—which could not matter at my time of life—there would not by any means have arisen, as all the old women of Newton said, this sad pressure on the brain-pan, and difficulty of coping even with a man of Anthony Stew's kind. But, alas! instead of opening out, the subtle plague struck inwards, leaving not a sign outside, but a delicate transparency.

This visit from Sir Philip did not end without a queer affair, whereof I had no notice then, being set down by all the village as only fit to poke about among the sand-hills, and then to die. But no one could take the church-clock from me, till the bell should be tolling for me; and as a matter of duty I drew some long arrears of salary.

It seems that Sir Philip drove down one day from Pen Coed to look after me, and having done this with his usual kindness, spread word through the children (who throughout our lane abounded) that really none of his money remained for any more sticks of peppermint. It was high time for them to think, he said, after ever so much education, of earning from sevenpence to tenpence a-week, for the good of the babies they carried. All the children gathered round him at this fine idea, really not believing quite that the purse of such a gentleman could have nothing more to say. And the girls bearing babes were-concave in the back, while the boys-

in the same predicament stuck out clumsily where their spines were setting.

"Drive me away," said Sir Philip to the groom; "drive me straight away anywhere: these Welsh children are so clever, I shall have no chance with them."

"Indeed, your Honour, they is," said the groom with a grin, as behoved a Welshman. "Would your Honour like to go down by the sea, and see our beautiful water-rocks, and our old annshent places?"

"To be sure," said Sir Philip; "the very thing. We have four hours' time to dinner yet; and I fear I have worn out poor Llewellyn. Now follow the coast-line if you are sure that your master would like it, Lewis, with this young horse, and our weight behind."

"Your Honour, nothing ever comes amiss to this young horse here. 'Tis tîre I should like to see him, for a change, as we do say. And master do always tell me keep salt-water on his legs whenever."

"Right!" cried Sir Philip, who loved the spree, being as full of spirits still, when the air took his trouble out of him, as the young horse in the shafts was.

So they drove away over the sands towards Sker, which it is easy enough to do with a good strong horse and a light car behind him. And by this time the neighbourhood had quite forgotten all its dread of sand-storms. In about half an hour they found themselves in a pretty place of grass and furze known as the Lock's Common, which faces the sea over some low cliffs, and at the western end coves down to it. This is some half a mile from Sker House, and a ragged dry wall makes the parish boundary, severing it from Sker-land.

"Drive on," cried Sir Philip; "I enjoy all this: I call this really beautiful, and this fine sward re-

minds me of Devonshire. But they ought to plant some trees here."

The driver replied that there was some danger in driving through Sker warren, unless one knew the ground thoroughly, on account of the number of rabbit-holes; and the baronet, with that true regard which a gentleman feels for the horse of a friend, cancelled his order immediately. "But," he continued, "I am so thirsty that I scarcely know what to do. My friend Llewellyn's hospitality is so overpowering. The taste of rum is almost unknown to me; but I could not refuse when he pressed me so. It has made me confoundedly thirsty, Lewis."

"Your Honour," said Lewis, "just round that corner, in a little break of the rocks, there is one of the finest springs in Glamorgan, 'Ffynnon Wen' we call it, the water does be sparkling so."

The groom, having no cup to fetch the water, stood by the horse in the little pant or combe; while old Sir Philip went down to the shore, to drink as our first forefather drank, and Gideon's men in the Bible. Whether he lapped or dipped, I know not (probably the latter, at his time of life), anyhow he assuaged his thirst—which rum of my quality could not have caused in a really sound constitution, after taking no more than a thimbleful—and then for a moment he sate on a rock, soothed by the purling water, to rest and to look around him. The place has no great beauty, as of a seaside spring in Devonshire, but more of cheer and life about it than their ferny grottoes. The bright water breaks from an elbow of rock, in many veins all uniting, and without any cliff above them; and then, after rushing a very few yards through set stone and loose shingle, loses its self-will upon the soft sand, and spreads a way over a

hundred yards of vague wetness and shallow shining.

The mild sun of April was glancing on this, and the tide just advancing to see to it, when the shadow of a slim figure fell on the stones before Sir Philip. So quietly had she slipped along, and appeared from the rocks so suddenly, that neither old man nor young maiden thought of the other until their eyes met.

"What, why, who?" cried the General, with something as much like a start as good conscience and long service had left in him: "who are you? Who are you, my dear?"

For his eyes were fixed on a fair young damsel of some fifteen summers, standing upright, with a pad on her head, and on the pad a red pitcher. Over her shoulders, and down to her waist, fell dark-brown curls abundantly, full of gleaming gold where the sun stole through the rocks to dwell in them. Her dress was nothing but blue Welsh flannel, gathered at the waist and tucked in front, and her beautifully tinted legs and azure-veined feet shone under it.

"Who are you, my pretty creature?" Sir Philip Bampfylde asked again, while she opened her grey eyes wide at him.

"Y Ferch o'r Scer, Syr," she answered shyly, and with the strong guttural tone which she knew was unpleasant to English ears. For

it was her sensitive point that she could not tell any one who she was; and her pride (which was manifold) always led her to draw back from questions.

On the other hand the old man's gaze of strong surprise and deep interest faded into mere admiration at the sound of our fine language.

"Fair young Cambrian, I have asked you rudely, and you are displeased with me. Lift your curls, my little dear, and let me see your face a while. I remember one just like it. There, you are put out again! So it was with the one I mean, when anything happened hastily."

The beautiful girl flung back her hair, and knelt to stoop her pitcher in the gurgling runnel; and then she looked at his silver locks, and was sorry for her impatience.

"Sir, I beg you to forgive me, if I have been rude to you. I am the maid from the old house yonder. I am often sent for this water, because it sparkles much more than our own does. If you please, I must go home, sir."

She filled the red pitcher, and tucked the blue skirt, as girls alone can manage it; and Sir Philip Bampfylde sighed at thinking of his age and loneliness, while with an old-fashioned gentleman's grace he lifted the pitcher and asked no more upon whose head he laid it.

CHAPTER LVIII.—MORE HASTE, LESS SPEED.

To do what is thoroughly becoming and graceful is my main desire. That any man should praise himself, and insist upon his own exploits and services to his native land, or even should let people guess at his valour, by any manner of side-wind,—such a course would simply deprive me of the only thing a poor battered sailor has left to support him against his pension; I mean

of course humble, but nevertheless well-grounded, self-respect.

This delicacy alone forbids me even to allude to that urgent and universal call for my very humble services which launched me on the briny waves once more, and in time for a share in the glorious battle fought off Cape St Vincent. Upon that great St Valentine's Day of 1797, I was Master

of the Excellent, under Captain Collingwood; and every boy in the parish knows how we captured the Saint Isidore, and really took the Saint Nicholas, though other people got the credit, and nearly took a four-decked ship of 130 guns, whose name was the Saint Miss Trinder, and who managed to sneak away, when by all rights we had got her.

However, let us be content with things beyond contradiction; the foremost of which is, that no ship ever was carried into action in a more masterly style than the Excellent upon that occasion. And the weight of this falls on the Master, far more than the Captain, I do assure you. So highly were my skill and coolness commended in the despatches, that if I could have borne to be reduced below inferior men, I might have died a real Captain in the British Navy. For (as happened to the now Captain Bowen, when Master of the Queen Charlotte) I was offered a lieutenant's commission, and doubted about accepting it. Had I been twenty years younger, of course, I must have jumped at the offer; but at my time of life, and with all my knowledge, it would have been too painful to be ordered about by some young dancer; therefore I declined; at the same time thinking it fair to suggest, for the sake of the many true Britons now dependent upon me, that a small pecuniary remittance would meet with my consideration. That faculty of mine, however, was not called to the encounter: I never heard more about it, and had to be satisfied with glory. But if a man is undervalued often, and puts up with it, he generally finds that fortune treats him with respect in other more serious aspects. For instance, what would have happened if Providence had ordained to send me into either

of those sad mutinies which disgraced our fleets so terribly? That deep respect for authority which (like the yolk of a nest-egg) lies calmly inside me, waiting to be sate upon; as well as my inborn sense of Nature's resistless determination to end by turning me into a gentleman (indications of which must have long ago been perceived by every reader), not to mention any common sense of duty in the abstract and wages in the pocket,—these considerations must have led me to lay a pistol to the head of almost every man I could find. However, from such a course of action grace and mercy preserved me: and perhaps it was quite as well. For I am not sure that I could have stopped any one of the four mutinies entirely; although I can answer for it, that never would bad manners take the lead in any ship, while I was Master. It is the shilly-shallying that produces all the mischief. If all our Captains had behaved like Captain Peard and his first lieutenant, in the St George off Cadiz, at the first spread of disaffection, it is my opinion that a great disgrace and danger would have been crushed in the bud. But what could be expected when our Government showed the like weakness? Twice they went hankering after peace, and even sent ambassadors! Who can ram shot home with pleasure while things of this kind are encouraged? To fight it out is the true Christianity, ordered by the Church itself.

And this we did, and are doing still, as Roger Berkrolles prophesied; and the only regret I have about it is, that a stiffness in my knees enables the other boarders to take a mean advantage of their youth, and jump into the chains or port-holes of a ship (when by my tactics conquered), so as to get a false lead of me. However, no small consolation

was to be gained by reflecting how much more prize-money would accrue to me than to any of these forward fellows, so that one might with an unmoved leg contemplate their precipitancy.

Even a sorer grievance was the breaking up and dispersion of our noble and gallant ship's company, so long accustomed to one another and to sharp discipline in the Defence. Where was Captain Bampfylde? where was Lieutenant Rodney Bluett? What was become of our three fine savages? Even Heaviside and Hezekiah were in my thoughts continually, and out of my knowledge entirely. As to the latter worthy gunsmith, "Artillerist to the King and Queen, and all the Royal Family," I can only at present say that when I had been last at home, and before my acceptance of that brief appointment in the Plymouth dockyard—in short, when first I recovered strength, after that long illness, to cope with the walk both to and fro—I found occasion to go to Bridgend, with my uniform on for the sake of the town. I had not turned the corner of the bridge a good half-hour, before that important fact was known from the river-bank to the churchyard. And Griffith of the "Cat and Snuffers," set up such a Welsh hurrah [as good as the screech of a wild-cat trapped] that it went up the hill to Newcastle. In a word, Hepzibah heard of me, and ran down the hill, like a roaring lion, demanding her Hezekiah!

What ensued is painful to me even now to speak of. For though my conscience was refitting, and ready to knock about again, after carrying too much sail, I could not find it in my heart to give the mother of a rapid family nothing but lies to feed upon. Many men of noble nature dwell upon nothing but conscience; as if that were the

one true compass for a man to steer by—whereas I never did find a man—outside my own Sunday clothes,—whose conscience would not back him up in whatever he had a mind for.

My own had always worked like a power plainly exposed to every one; thereby gaining strength and revolving as fast as a mountain windmill, when the corn is falling away to chaff. This, however, was not required in the present instance; for Hepzibah (like a good woman) fell from one extreme into the opposite. From bitter reviling to praise and gratitude was but a turn of the tongue to her; especially when I happened to whisper into the ear of Griffith that the whole of my stipend for Newton Church clock would now, according to my views of justice, be handed to Hezekiah's wife, inasmuch as the worthy gunsmith had rejoined the Church of England. And I said what a dreadful blow this would be to all the Nicodemites, when the gun-officer returned with money enough to build a chapel: however, I felt that it served them right, because they had lately begun to sneer at his good wife's wonderful prophecies. In a word, I had promised to find Hezekiah; and, both while in harbour and now when afloat, I tried to get tidings not only of him, but also of the Newton tailor, and Heaviside, and the three wild men, as well as young Harry Savage, Lieutenant Bluett, and Captain Bampfylde. For all of these being at sea and in war-time, who could say what had befallen them? Whereas I knew all about most of our people now living ashore in the middle of peace. However, of course one must expect old shipmates to be parted; and with all the vast force now afloat under the British flag, it would almost be a wonder if any of us should haul our wind

within hailing distance of the others during our cruise in this world.

Nevertheless it did so happen, as I plainly will set forth, so far as I remember. Through the rest of the year '97 and the early part of the following year I was knocking about off and on near the Straits, being appointed to another ship while the *Excellent* was refitting, and afterwards to the *Goliath*, a fine 74, under Captain Foley.

In the month of May 1798, all our Mediterranean fleet, except three ships of the line, lay blockading Cadiz. Our Admiral, the Earl St Vincent, formerly Sir John Jervis, had orders also to watch Toulon, where a great fleet was assembling. And our information was so scant and contradictory, that our Admiral sent but three ships of the line and a frigate or two to see what those crafty Frenchmen might be up to. But this searching squadron had a commander whose name was Horatio Nelson.

This was not by any means the man to let frog-eaters do exactly as they pleased with us. "I believe in the King of England; I have faith in discipline; I abhor all Frenchmen worse than the very devil." Such was his creed; and at any moment he would give his life for it. It is something for a man to know what he means, and be able to put it clearly; and this alone fetches to his side more than half of the arguers who cannot make their minds up. But it is a much rarer gift, and not often combined with the other, for a man to enter into, and be able to follow up, ways and turns, and ins and outs, of the natures of all other men. If this is done by practised subtlety, it arouses hatred, and can get no further. But if it be a gift of nature exercised unwittingly, and with kind love of manliness, all who are worth bringing over are brought over by it.

If it were not hence, I know not whence it was that Nelson had such power over every man of us. To know what he meant, to pronounce it, and to perceive what others meant, these three powers enabled him to make all the rest mean what he did. At any rate such is my opinion; although I would not fly in the face of better scholars than myself, who declared that here was witchcraft. What else could account for the manner in which all Nelson's equals in rank at once acknowledged him as the foremost, and felt no jealousy towards him? Even Admiral Earl St Vincent, great commander as he was, is said to have often deferred to the judgment of the younger officer. As for the men, they all looked upon it as worth a gold watch to sail under him. Therefore we officers of the in-shore squadron, under Captain Troubridge, could scarcely keep our crews from the most tremendous and uproarious cheers when we got orders to make sail for the Mediterranean, and place ourselves under the command of Nelson. We could not allow any cheering, because the Dons ashore were not to know a word about our departure, lest they should inform the Croppos, under whose orders they now were acting. And a British cheer has such a ring over the waters of the sea, and leaps from wave to wave so, that I have heard it a league away when roused up well to windward. So our fine fellows had leave to cheer to their hearts' content when we got our offing; and partly under my conduct (for I led the way in the *Goliath*), nine seventy-fours got away to sea in the night of the 24th of May, and nine liners from England replaced them, without a single Jack Spaniard ever suspecting any movement. Every one knows what a time we had of it, after joining our Admiral; how we

dashed away helter-skelter, from one end of the world to the other almost, in a thorough wild-goose chase, because the Board of Admiralty, with their usual management, sent thirteen ships of the line especially on a searching scurry without one frigate to scout for them! We were obliged to sail, of course, within signalling distance of each other, and so that line of battle might be formed without delay, upon appearance of the enemy. For we now had a man whose signal was "Go at 'em when you see 'em." Also, as always comes to pass when the sons of Beelzebub are abroad, a thick haze lay both day and night upon the face of the water. So that, while sailing in close order, upon the night of the shortest day, we are said to have crossed the wake of the Frenchmen, almost ere it grew white again, without even sniffing their roasted frogs. Possibly this is true, in spite of all the great Nelson's vigilance; for I went to my hammock quite early that night, having suffered much from a hollow eye-tooth ever since I lost sight of poor Polly.

Admiral Nelson made no mistake. He had in the highest degree what is called in human nature "genius," and in dogs and horses "instinct." That is to say, he knew how to sniff out the road to almost anything. Trusting to this tenfold

(when he found that our Government would not hear of it, but was nearly certain of a mighty landing upon Ireland), off he set for Egypt, carrying on with every blessed sail that would or even would not draw. We came to that coast at a racing speed, and you should have seen his vexation when there was no French ship in the roadstead. "I have made a false cast, Troubridge," he cried; "I shall write to be superseded. My want of judgment may prove fatal to my King and country."

For our Government had sent him word, through the Earl St Vincent, that the great expedition from Toulon would sail for England or Ireland; and he at his peril had taken upon him to reject such nonsense. But now (as happens by Nature's justice to all very sanguine men) he was ready to smite the breast that had suggested pure truth to him. Thus being baffled we made all sail, and after a chase of six hundred leagues, and continually beating to windward, were forced to bear up on St Swithin's Day and make for the coast of Sicily. And it shows the value of good old hands, and thoroughly sound experience, that I, the oldest man perhaps in the fleet, could alone guide the fleet into Syracuse. Here our fierce excitement bubbled while we took in water.

CHAPTER LIX.—IN A ROCKY BOWER.

I never hear of human impatience without sagely reflecting upon the rapid flight of time, when age draws on, and business thickens, and all the glory of this world must soon be left behind us. From the date of my great catch of fish and landing of Bardie at Pool Tavan, to the day of my guiding the British

fleet betwixt the shoals of Syracuse, more than sixteen years had passed, and scarce left time to count them.

Therefore it was but a natural thing that the two little maidens with whom I began should now be grown up, and creating a stir in the minds of young men of the neighbourhood. Early in this pre-

sent month of July, that north-west breeze, which was baffling our fleet off the coast of Anatolia, was playing among the rocks of Sker with the curls and skirts and ribbons of these two fair young damsels. Or rather with the ribbons of one, for Bunny alone wore streamers, wherein her heart delighted; while the maid of Sker was dressed as plainly as if she had been her servant. Not that her inborn love of brightness ever had abandoned her, but that her vanities were put down very sternly by Master Berkrolles whenever she came back from Candleston; and but for her lessons in music there—which were beyond Roger's compass—he would have raised his voice against her visits to the good Colonel. For the old man's heart was entirely fixed upon the graceful maiden, and his chief anxiety was to keep her out of the way of harm. He knew that the Colonel loved nothing better (as behoved his lineage) than true and free hospitality; and he feared that the simple and nameless girl might set her affections on some grand guest, who would scorn her derelict origin. Now she led Bunny into a cave, or rather a snug little cove of rock, which she always called her cradle, and where she had spent many lonely hours, in singing pure Welsh melodies of the sweetest sadness, feeling a love of the desert places from her own desertion. Then down she sate in her chair of stone, with limpets and barnacles studding it; while Bunny in the established manner bounced down on a pebble and gazed at her.

My son's daughter was a solid girl, very well built as our family is, and raking most handsomely fore and aft. Her fine black eyes, and abiding colour, and the modesty inherited from her grandfather, and some reflection perhaps of his fame,

made her a favourite everywhere. And any grandfather might well have been proud to see how she carried her dress off.

The younger maid sate right above her, quite as if Nature had ordered it so; and drew her skirt of homespun camlet over her dainty feet, because the place was wet and chilly. And anybody looking must have said that she was born to grace. The clear outlines of oval face and delicate strength of forehead were moulded as by Nature only can such dainty work be done. Gentle pride and quiet moods of lonely meditation had deepened and subdued the radiance of the large grey eyes, and changed the dancing mirth of childhood into soft intelligence. And it must have been a fine affair, with the sunshine glancing on the breezy sea, to take a look at the lights and shadows of so clear a countenance.

Bunny, like a frigate riding, doused her head and all her outworks forward of the bends; and then hung fluttering and doubtful, just as if she had missed stays.

"It is not your engagement, my dear Bunny," began Delushy, as if she were ten years the senior officer; "you must not suppose for a moment that I object to your engagement. It is time, of course, for you to think, among so many suitors, of some one to put up with, especially after what you told me about having toothache. And Watkin is thoroughly good and kind, and able to read quite respectably. But what I blame you for is this, that you have not been straightforward, Bunny. Why have you kept me in the dark about this one of your many 'sweetheartings,' as you always call them?"

"And for sure, miss, then I never did no such thing; unless it was that I thought you was wanting him."

"I! You surely cannot have thought it! I want Watkin Thomas!"

"Well, miss, you need not fly out like that. All the girls in Newton was after him. And if it wasn't you as wanted him, it might be him as wanted you, which comes to the same thing always."

"I don't quite think that it does, dear Bunny, though you may have made it do so. Now look up and kiss me, dear: you know that I love you very much, though I have a way of saying things. And then I am longing to beg pardon when I have vexed any one. It comes of my 'noble birth,' I suppose, which the girls of Newton laugh about. How I wish that I were but the child of the poorest good man in the parish! But now I am tired of thinking of it. What good ever comes of it? And what can one poor atom matter?"

"You are not a poor atom; you are the best, and the cleverest, and most learnedest, and most beautifullest lady as ever was seen in the whole of the land."

After or rather in the middle of which words, our Bunny, with her usual vigour and true national ardour, leaped into the arms of Delushy, so that they had a good cry together. "You will wait, of course, for your Granny to come, before you settle anything."

"Will I, indeed?" cried that wicked Bunny, and lucky for her that I was not there: "I shall do nothing of the sort. If he chooses to be always away at sea, conquering the French for ever, and never coming home when he can help it, he must make up his mind to be surprised when he happens to come home again. For sure then, that is right enough."

"Well, it does seem almost reasonable," answered the young lady:

"and I think sometimes that we have no right to expect so much as that of things. It is not what they often do; and so they lose the habit of it."

"I do not quite understand," said Bunny.

"And I don't half understand," said Bardie:—"but—oh my dear, what shall I do? He is coming this way, I am sure. And I would not have you know anything of it—and of course you must feel that it is all nonsense. And I did not mean any harm about 'courting'; only you ought to be out of the way, and yet at the same time in it."

Our Bunny was such a slow-witted girl, and at the same time so particular (inheriting slowness from her good mother, and conscience from third generation), that really she could make no hand at meeting such a crisis. For now she began to perceive gold-lace, which alone discomfits the woman-race, and sets their minds going upon what they love. And so she did very little else but stare.

"I did think you would have helped me, Bunny," Delushy cried, with aggrievement. "I wanted to hear your own affairs, of course; but I would not have brought you here——"

"Young ladies, well met!" cried as solid a voice as the chops of the Channel had ever tautened: "I knew that you were here, and so I came down to look after you."

"Sure then, sir, and I do think that it is very kind of you. We was just awanting looking after. Oh what a fish I do see in that pool! Please only you now both to keep back. I shall be back again, now just, sir." With these words away flew Bunny, as if her life were set on it.

"What a fine creature, to be sure!" said Commander Bluet,

thoughtfully; "she reminds me so much of her grandfather. There is something so strongly alike between them, in their reckless outspoken honour, as well as in the turn of the nose they have."

"Let us follow, and admire her a little more," cried Delushy: "she deserves it, as you say; and perhaps—well perhaps she likes it."

Young Rodney looked at her a little while, and then at the ground a little while; because he was a stupid fellow as concerns young women. He thought this one such a perfect wonder, as may well be said of all of them. Then those two fenced about a little, out of shot of each other's eyes.

There was no doubt between them as to the meaning of each other. But they both seemed to think it wise to have a little bit of vexing before doing any more. And thus they looked at one another as if there was nothing between them. And all the time, how they were longing!

"I must have yes or no:" for Rodney could not outlast the young lady: "yes or no; you know what I mean. I am almost always at sea; and to-morrow I start to join Nelson. With him there is no play-work. I hope to satisfy him, though I know what he is to satisfy. But I hope to do it."

"Of course you will," Delushy answered. "You seem to give great satisfaction; almost everywhere, I am sure."

"Do I give it, you proud creature, where I long to give it most?"

"How can I pretend to say, without being told in what latitude even—as I think your expression is—this amiable desire lies?"

"As if you did not know, Delushy!"

"As if I did know, Captain Bluett! And another thing—I am

not to be called 'Delushy,' much, in that way."

"Very well, then; much in another way. Delushy, Delushy, delicious Delushy, what makes you so unkind to me? To-morrow I go away, and perhaps we shall never meet again, Delushy: and then how you would reproach yourself. Don't you think you would now?"

"When never and then come together—yes. I suppose all sailors talk so."

"If I cannot even talk to please you, there is nothing more to say. I think that the bards have turned your head with their harpings, and their fiddle-strings, and ballads (in very bad Welsh, no doubt) about 'the charming maid of Sker;' and so on. When you are old enough to know better, and the young conceit wears out of you, you may be sorry, Miss Andalusia, for your wonderful cleverness."

He made her a bow with his handsome hat, and her warm young heart was chilled by it. Surely he ought to have shaken hands. She tried to keep her own meaning at home, and bid him farewell with a curtsy, while he tried not to look back again; but fortune or nature was too much for them, and their eyes met wistfully.

These things are out of my line so much, that I cannot pretend to say now for a moment what these very young people did; and everybody else having done the same, with more or less unwisdom, according to constitution, may admire the power of charity which restrains me from describing them. My favourite writer of Scripture is St Paul, who was afraid of nobody, and who spent his time in making sails when the thorn in the flesh permitted him. And this great writer describes the quick manners of maidens far better than I can.

Wherefore I keep myself up aloft until they have had a good spell of it.

"I have no opinion, now. What can you expect of me? Rodney, I must stop and think for nearly a quarter of a century before I have an opinion."

"Then stay, just so; and let me admire you, till I have to swim with you."

"Rodney, you are reckless. Here comes the tide; and you know I have got my very best Candleston side-lace boots on!"

"Then come out of this rocky bower, which suits your fate so, darling; and let us talk most sensibly."

"By all means; if you think we can. There, you need not touch me, Rodney;—I can get out very well indeed. I know these rocks better than you do perhaps. Now sit on this rock where old David first hooked me, as I have heard that old chatterbox tell fifty times, as if he had done some great great thing."

"He did indeed a grand grand thing. No wonder that he is proud of it. And he has so much to be proud of that you may take it for your highest compliment. Perhaps there is no other man in the Service—or I might say in all the civilised world——" But it hurts me to tell what this excellent officer said or even thought of me. He was such a first-rate judge by this time that I must leave his opinion blank.

Over the sea they began to look, in a discontented quietude; as the manner of young mortals is before they begin to know better, and with great ideas moving them. Bunny, with the very kindest discretion, had run away entirely, and might now be seen at the far end of the sands, and springing up the rocks, on her way to Newton. So those two sat side by side, with their

hearts full of one another, and their minds made up to face the world together, whatever might come of it. For as yet they could see nothing clearly through the warm haze of loving, being wrapped up in an atmosphere which generally leads to a hurricane. But to them, for a few short minutes, earth and sea and sky were all one universal heaven.

"It will not do," cried the maid of Sker, suddenly awaking with a short deep sigh, and drawing back her delicate hand from the broad palm of young Rodney: "it will never, never do. We must both be mad to think of it."

"Who could fail to be mad," he answered, "if you set the example?"

"Now, don't be so dreadfully stupid, Rodney. What I say is most serious. Of course you know the world better than I do, as you told me yesterday, after sailing a dozen times round it. But I am thinking of other things. Not of what the world will say, but of what I myself must feel. And the first of these things is that I cannot be cruelly ungrateful. It would be the deepest ingratitude to the Colonel if I went on with it."

"Went on with it! What a way to speak! As if you could be off with it when you pleased! And my good uncle loves you like his own daughter; and so does my mother. Now what can you mean?"

"As if you did not know indeed! Now, Rodney, do talk sensibly. I ought to know, if any one does, what your uncle and your mother are. And I know that they would rather see your death in the Gazette than your marriage with an unknown, nameless nobody like me, sir."

"Well, of course, we must take the chance of that," said Captain Bluett, carelessly. "The Colonel is the best soul in the world, and

my dear mother a most excellent creature, whenever she listens to reason. But as to my asking their permission—it is the last thing I should dream of. I am old enough to know my own mind, and to get my own living, I should hope, as well as that of my family. And if I am only in time with Nelson, of course we shall do wonders.”

For a minute or two the poor young maid had not a word to say to him. She longed to throw her arms around him, when he spoke so proudly, and to indulge her own pride in him, as against all the world beside. But having been brought up in so much trouble, she had learned to check herself. So that she did nothing more than wait for him to go on again. And this he did with sparkling eyes and the confidence of a young British tar.

“There is another thing, my beauty, which they are bound to consider, as well as all the prize-money I shall earn. And that is that they have nobody except themselves to thank for it. They must have known what was sure to happen, if they chose to have you there whenever I was home from sea. And my mother is so clever too—to my mind it is plain enough that they meant me to do what I have done.”

“And pray what is that?”

“As if you did not know! Come now, you must pay the penalty of asking for a compliment. Talk about breeding and good birth, and that stuff! Why, look at your hands and then look at mine. Put your fingers between mine—both

hands, both hands—that’s the way. Now just feel my great clumsy things, and then see how lovely yours are—as clear as wax-tapers, and just touched with rose, and every nail with a fairy gift, and pointed like an almond. A ‘nameless nobody’ indeed! What nameless nobody ever had such nails? By way of contrast examine mine.”

“Oh but you bite yours shockingly, Rodney. I am sure that you do, though I never saw you. You must be cured of that dreadful trick.”

“That shall be your first job, Delushy, when you are Mrs Rodney. Now for another great sign of birth. Do you see any peak to my upper lip?”

“No, I can’t say I do. But how foolish you are! I ought to be crying, and you make me laugh!”

“Then just let me show you the peak to yours. Honour bright—and no mean advantages—that is to say if I can help it. Oh, here’s that blessed Moxy coming! May the Frenchmen rob her henroost! Now just one promise, darling, darling; just one little promise. To-morrow I go to most desperate battles, and lucky to come home with one arm and one leg. Therefore, promise a solemn promise to have no one in the world but me.”

“I think,” said the maid, with her lips to his ear, in the true old coaxing fashion, “that I may very well promise that. But I will promise another thing too. And that is, not to have even you, until your dear mother and good uncle come to me and ask me. And that can never never be.”

CHAPTER LX.—NELSON AND THE NILE.

The first day of August in the year of our Lord 1798 is a day to be long remembered by every Briton with a piece of constitution in him. For

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on that day our glorious navy, under the immortal Nelson, administered to the Frenchmen, under Admiral Brewer, as pure and perfect a lather-

ing as is to be found in all history. This I never should venture to put upon my own authority (especially after the prominent part assigned therein by Providence to a humble individual who came from Newton-Nottage), for with history I have no patience at all, because it always contradicts the very things I have seen and known: but I am bound to believe a man of such high principles and deep reading as Master Roger Berkrolles. And he tells me that I have helped to produce the greatest of all great victories.

Be that one way or the other, I can tell you every word concerning how we managed it; and you need not for one moment think me capable of prejudice. Quite the contrary, I assure you. There could not have been in the British fleet any man more determined to do justice to all Crappos than a thoroughly ancient navigator, now Master of the Goliath.

We knew exactly what to do, every Captain, every Master, every quarter-master; even the powder-monkeys had their proper work laid out for them. The spirit of Nelson ran through us all; and our hearts caught fire from his heart. From the moment of our first glimpse at the Frenchmen spread out in that tempting manner, beautifully moored and riding in a long line head and stern, every old seaman among us began to count on his fingers prize-money. They thought that we would not fight that night, for the sun was low when we found them; and with their perpetual conceit, they were hard at work taking water in. I shall never forget how beautiful these ships looked, and how peaceful. A French ship always sits the water with an elegant quickness, like a Frenchwoman at the looking-glass. And

though we brought the evening breeze in very briskly with us, there was hardly swell enough in the bay to make them play their hawsers. Many fine things have I seen, and therefore know pretty well how to look at them, which a man never can do upon the first or even the second occasion. But it was worth any man's while to live to the age of threescore years and eight, with a sound mind in a sound body, and eyes almost as good as ever, if there were nothing for it more than to see what I saw at this moment. Six-and-twenty ships of the line, thirteen bearing the tricolor, and riding cleared for action, the other thirteen with the red cross flying, the cross of St George on the ground of white, and tossing the blue water from their stems under pressure of canvass. Onward rushed our British ships, as if every one of them was alive, and driven out of all patience by the wicked escapes of the enemy. Twelve hundred leagues of chase had they cost us, ingratitude towards God every night, and love of the devil at morning, with dread of our country for ever prevailing, and mistrust of our own good selves. And now at last we had got them tight; and mean we did to keep them. Captain Foley came up to me as I stood on the ratlines to hear the report of the men in the starboard fore-chains; and his fine open face was clouded. "Master," he said, "how much more of this? Damn your soundings. Can't you see that the Zealous is drawing ahead of us? Hood has nobody in the chains. If you can't take the ship into action, I will. Stand by there to set top-gallant-sails."

These had been taken in, scarce five minutes ago, as prudence demanded, for none of us had any chart of the bay; and even I knew

little about it, except that there was a great shoal of rock betwixt Aboukir island and the van ship of the enemy. And but for my warning, we might have followed the two French brigs appointed to decoy us in that direction. Now, having filled top-gallant-sails, we rapidly headed our rival the Zealous, in spite of all that she could do; and we had the honour of receiving the first shot of the enemy. For now we were rushing in, stem on, having formed line of battle, towards the van of the anchored Frenchmen.

Now as to what followed, and the brilliant idea which occurred to somebody to turn the enemy's line and take them on the larboard or inner side (on which they were quite unprepared for attack) no two authorities are quite agreed, simply because they all are wrong. Some attribute this grand manœuvre to our great Admiral Nelson, others to Captain Hood of the Zealous, and others to our Captain Foley. This latter is nearest the mark; but from whom did Captain Foley obtain the hint? Modesty forbids me to say what Welshman it was who devised this noble and most decisive stratagem, while patriotic duty compels me to say that it was a Welshman, and more than that a Glamorganshire man, born in a favoured part of the quiet village of N—N—. Enough, unless I add that internal evidence will convince any unprejudiced person that none but an ancient fisherman, and thorough-going long-shoreman, could by any possibility have smelled out his way so cleverly.

Our great Admiral saw, with his usual insight into Frenchmen, that if they remained at anchor we were sure to man their capstans. For Crappos fight well enough with a rush, but unsteadily when at a standstill, and worst of all when

taken by surprise and outmanœuvred. And the manner in which the British fleet advanced was enough to strike them cold by its majesty and its awfulness. For in perfect silence we were gliding over the dark-blue sea, with the stately height of the white sails shining, and the sky behind us full of solemn yellow sunset. Even we, so sure of conquest, and so nerved with stern delight, could not gaze on the things around us, and the work before us, without for a moment wondering whether the Lord in heaven looked down at us.

At any rate we obeyed to the letter the orders both of our Admiral and of a man scarcely less remarkable. "Let not the sun go down on your wrath," are the very words of St Paul, I believe; and we never fired a shot until there was no sun left to look at it. I stood by the man at the wheel myself, and laid my own hand to it: for it was a matter of very fine steerage, to run in ahead of the French line, ware soundings, and then bear up on their larboard bow, to deliver a thorough good raking broadside. I remember looking over my left shoulder after we bore up our helm a-weather, while crossing the bows of the Carrier (as the foremost enemy's ship was called), and there was the last limb of the sun like the hoof of a horse disappearing. And my own head nearly went with it, as the wind of a round-shot knocked me over. "Bear up, bear up, lads," cried Captain Foley, "our time has come at last, my boys. Well done Llewellyn! A finer sample of conning and steerage was never seen. Let go the best bower. Pass the word. Ready at quarters all of you. Now she bears clear fore and aft. Damn their eyes, let them have it."

Out rang the whole of our lar-

board battery, almost like a single gun; a finer thing was never seen; and before the ring passed into a roar, the yell of Frenchmen came through the smoke. Masts and spars flew right and left with the bones of men among them, and the sea began to hiss and heave, and the ships to reel and tremble, and the roar of a mad volcano rose, and nothing kept either shape or tenor, except the faces of brave men.

Every ship in our fleet was prepared to anchor by the stern, so as to spring our broadsides aright; but the anchor of the Goliath did not bite so soon as it should have done, so that we ran past the Carrier, and brought up on the larboard quarter of the second French 74, with a frigate and a brig of war to employ a few of our starboard guns. By this time the rapid darkness fell, and we fought by the light of our own guns. And now the skill of our Admiral and his great ideas were manifest, for every French ship had two English upon it, and some of them even three at a time. In a word, we began with the head of their line, and crushed it, and so on joint by joint, ere even the centre and much more the tail could fetch their way up to take part in it. Our antagonist was the first that struck, being the second of the Frenchman's line, and by name the Conquer-ant. But she found in Captain Foley and David Llewellyn an ant a little too clever to conquer. We were a good deal knocked about, with most of our main rigging shot away, and all our masts heavily wounded. Nevertheless we drew ahead, to double upon the third French ship, of the wonderful name of *Sparticipate*.

From this ship I received a shot, which, but for the mercy of the Lord, must have made a perfect end of me. That my end may be per-

fect has long been my wish, and the tenor of my life leads up to it. Nevertheless, who am I to deny that I was not ready for the final finish at that very moment! And now, at this time of writing, I find myself ready to wait a bit longer. What I mean was a chain-shot sailing along, rather slowly as they always do; and yet so fast that I could not either duck or jump at sight of it, although there was light enough now for anything, with the French Admiral on fire. Happening to be well satisfied with my state of mind at that moment (not from congratulation, so much as from my inside conscience), I now was beginning to fill a pipe, and to dwell upon further manœuvres. For one of the foremost points of all, after thoroughly drubbing the enemy, is to keep a fine self-control, and be ready to go on with it.

No sooner had I filled this pipe, and taken a piece of wadding to light it, which was burning handy (in spite of all my orders), than away went a piece of me; and down went I, as dead as a Dutch herring. At least so everybody thought, who had time to think about it; and "the Master's dead" ran along the deck, so far as time was to tell of it. I must have lain numb for an hour, I doubt, with the roar of the guns, and the shaking of bulk-heads, like a shiver, jarring me, and a pool of blood curdling into me, and another poor fellow cast into the scuppers and clutching at me in his groaning, when the heavens took fire in one red blaze, and a thundering roar, that might rouse the dead, drowned all the rolling battle-din. I saw the white looks of our crew all aghast, and their bodies scared out of death's manufacture, by this triumph of mortality; and the elbows of big fellows holding the linstock fell quivering back to their

shaken ribs. For the whole sky was blotched with the corpses of men, like the stones of a crater cast upwards; and the sheet of the fire behind them showed their knees, and their bellies, and streaming hair. Then with a hiss, like electric hail, from a mile's height all came down again, corpses first (being softer things), and timbers next, and then the great spars that had streaked the sky like rockets.

The violence of this matter so attracted my attention that I was enabled to rally my wits, and lean

on one elbow and look at it. And I do assure you that anybody who happened to be out of sight of it, lost a finer chance than ever he can have another prospect of. For a hundred-and-twenty-gun ship had blown up, with an Admiral and Rear-Admiral, not to mention a Commodore, and at least 700 complement. And when the concussion was over, there fell the silence of death upon all men. Not a gun was fired, nor an order given, except to man the boats in hopes of saving some poor fellows.

CHAPTER LXI.—A SAVAGE DEED.

Nevertheless our Britons were forced to renew the battle afterwards; because those Frenchmen had not the manners to surrender, as they should have done. And they even compelled us to batter their ships so seriously and sadly, that when we took possession some were scarcely worth the trouble. To make us blow up their poor Admiral was a distressing thing to begin with; but when that was done, to go on with the battle was as bad as the dog in the manger. What good could it do them to rob a poor British sailor of half his prize-money? And such conduct becomes at least twice as ungenerous when they actually have wounded him!

My wound was sore, and so was I, on the following day, I can tell you; for not being now such a very young man, I found it a precious hard thing to renew the power of blood that was gone from me. And after the terrible scene that awoke me from the first trance of carnage, I was thrown by the mercy of Providence into pure insensibility. This I am bound to declare; because the public might otherwise think itself

wronged, and perhaps even vote me down as of no value, for failing to give them the end of this battle so brilliantly as the beginning. I defy my old rival, the Newton tailor (although a much younger man perhaps than myself, and with my help a pretty good seaman), to take up the tucks of this battle as well as I have done,—though not well done. Even if a tailor can come up and fight (which he did, for the honour of Cambria), none of his customers can expect any more than French-chalk flourishes when a piece of description is down in his books. However, let him cut his cloth. He is still at sea, or else under it; and if he ever does come home, and sit down to his shop-board—as his wife says he is sure to do—his very first order shall be for a church-going coat, with a doubled-up sleeve to it.

For the Frenchmen took my left arm away in a thoroughly lubberly manner. If they had done it with a good cross-cut, like my old wound of forty years' standing, I would at once have set it down to the credit of their nation. But when I came to dwell over the subject (as for weeks my duty was), more and

more clear to me it became, that instead of honour they had now incurred a lasting national disgrace. The fellows who charged that gun had been afraid of the recoil of it. Half a charge of powder makes the vilest fracture to deal with—however, there I was by the heels, and now for nobler people. Only while my wound is green you must not be too hard on me.

The Goliath was ordered to chase down the bay, on the morning after the battle, together with the Theseus and a frigate called the Leader. This frigate was commanded by the Honourable Rodney Bluett, now a post-captain, and who had done wonders in the height of last night's combat. He had brought up in the most brazen-faced manner, without any sense of his metal, close below the starboard bow of the great three-decker Orient and the quarter of the Franklin, and thence he fired away at both, while all their shot flew over him. And this was afterwards said to have been the cleverest thing done by all of us, except the fine helm and calm handling of H.M. ship Goliath.

The two ships, in chase of which we were despatched, ran ashore and surrendered, as I was told afterwards (for of course I was down in my berth at the time, with the surgeon looking after me); and thus out of thirteen French sail of the line, we took or destroyed eleven. And as we bore up after taking possession, the Leader ran under our counter and hailed us, "Have you a Justice of the Peace on board?" Our Captain replied that he was himself a member of the quorum, but could not attend to such business now as making of wills and so on. Hereupon Captain Bluett came forward, and with a polite wave of his hat called out that Captain Foley would lay him under a special obligation,

as well as clear the honour of a gallant naval officer, by coming on board of the Leader, to receive the deposition of a dying man. In ten minutes' time our good skipper stood in the cockpit of the Leader, while Captain Bluett wrote down the confession of a desperately-wounded seaman, who was clearing his conscience of perilous wrong before he should face his Creator. The poor fellow sat on a pallet propped up by the bulkhead and a pillow; that is to say, if a man can sit who has no legs left him. A round-shot had caught him in the tuck of both thighs, and the surgeon could now do no more for him. Indeed he was only enabled to speak, or to gasp out his last syllables, by gulps of raw brandy which he was taking, with great draughts of water between them. On the other side of his dying bed stood Cannibals Dick and Joe, howling, and nodding their heads from time to time, whenever he lifted his glazing eyes to them for confirmation. For it was my honest and highly-respected friend, the poor Jack Wildman, who now lay in this sad condition, upon the very brink of another world. And I cannot do better than give his own words, as put into shape by two clear-witted men, Captains Foley and Rodney Bluett. Only for the reader's sake I omit a great deal of groaning.

"*This is the solemn and dying delivery of me, known as 'Jack Wildman,' A.B. seaman of H.M. frigate Leader, now off the coast of Egypt, and dying through a hurt in battle with the Frenchmen. I cannot tell my name, or age, or where I was born, or anything about myself; and it does not matter, as I have nothing to leave behind me. Dick and Joe are to have my clothes, and my pay if there is any; and the woman that*

used to be my wife is to have my medals for good behaviour in the three battles I have partaken of. My money would be no good to her, because they never use it; but the women are fond of ornaments.

"I was one of a race of naked people, living in holes of the earth at a place we did not know the name of. I now know that it was Nympton in Devonshire, which is in England, they tell me. No one had any right to come near us, except the great man who had given us land, and defended us from all enemies.

"His name was Parson Chouane, I believe, but I do not know how to spell it. He never told us of a thing like God; but I heard of it every day in the navy whenever my betters were angry. Also I learned to read wonderful writings; but I can speak the truth all the same.

"Ever since I began to be put into clothes, and taught to kill other people, I have longed to tell of an evil thing which happened once among us. How long ago I cannot tell, for we never count time as you do, but it must have been many years back, for I had no hair on my body except my head. We had a man then who took lead among us, so far as there was any lead; and I think that he thought himself my father, because he gave me the most victuals. At any rate we had no other man to come near him in any cunningness. Our master Chouane came down sometimes, and took a pride in watching him, and liked him so much that he laughed at him, which he never did to the rest of us.

"This man, my father as I may call him, took me all over the great brown moors one night in some very hot weather. In the morning we came to a great heap of houses,

and hid in a copse till the evening. At dusk we set out again, and came to a great and rich house by the side of a river. The lower portholes seemed full of lights, and on the flat place in front of them a band of music—such as now I love—was playing, and people were dancing. I had never heard such a thing before; and my father had all he could do to keep me in the black trees out of sight of them. And among the thick of the going about we saw our master Chouane in his hunting-dress.

"This must have been what great people call a 'masked ball,' I am sure of it; since I saw one, when, in the Bellona, there were many women somewhere. But at the end of the great light place, looking out over the water, there was a quiet shady place for tired people to rest a bit. When the whole of the music was crashing like a battle, and people going round like great flies in a web, my father led me down by the river-side, and sent me up some dark narrow steps, and pointed to two little babies. The whole of the business was all about these, and the festival was to make much of them. The nurse for a moment had set them upright, while she just spoke to a young sailor-man; and crawling, as all of us can, I brought down these two babies to my father; and one was heavy, and the other light.

"My father had scarcely got hold of them, and the nurse had not yet missed them, when on the dark shore by the river-side, perhaps five fathoms under the gaiety, Parson Chouane came up to my father, and whispered, and gave orders. I know not what they said, for I had no sense of tongues then, nor desired it; for we knew what we wanted by signs, and sounds, and saved a world of trouble so. Only I thought

that our master was angry at having the girl-child brought away. He wanted only the boy perhaps, who was sleepy and knew nothing. But the girl-child shook her hand at him, and said, 'E bad man, Bardie knows 'a.'

"I—every one of us—was amazed—so very small—— Oh, sir, I can tell you no more, I think."

"Indeed then, but you must, my friend," cried Captain Foley, with spirit enough to set a dead man talking; "finish this story, you thief of the world, before you cheat the hangman. Two lovely childer stolen away from a first-rate family to give a ball of that kind—and devil a bit you repent of it!"

Poor dying Jack looked up at him, and then at the place where his legs should have been, and he seemed ashamed for the want of them. Then he played with the sheet for a twitch or two, as if proud of his arms still remaining; and checked backed the agony tempting him now to bite it with his great white teeth.

"Ask the rest of us, Captain," he said; "Joe, you know it; Dick, you know it, now that I am telling you. The boy was brought up with us, and you call him Harry Savage. I knew the great house when I saw it again. And I longed to tell the good old man there; but for the sake of our people. Chouane would have destroyed them all. I was tempted after they pelted me so, and the old man was so good to me; but something always stopped me, and I wanted poor Harry to go to Heaven—— Oh, a little drink of water!"

Captain Foley was partly inclined to take a great deal of poor Jack's confession for no more than the raving of a light-headed man; but Rodney Bluett conjured him to take down every word of it. And when this young officer spoke of his former

chief and well-known friend, now Commodore Sir Drake Bampfylde (being knighted for service in India), and how all his life he had lain under a cloud by reason of this very matter, not another word did our Captain need from him, but took up his pen again.

"I ought to have told," said the dying man, slowly; "only I could not bring myself. But now you will know, you will all know now. My father is dead; but Dick and Joe can swear that the boy is the baby. He had beautiful clothes on, they shone in the boat; but the girl-child had on no more than a smock, that they might see her dancing. Our master did not stay with us a minute, but pushed us all into a boat on the tide, cut the rope, and was back with the dancers. My father had learned just enough of a boat to keep her straight in the tideway, and I had to lie down over the babies, to keep their white clothes from notice. We went so fast that I was quite scared, having never been afloat before, so there must have been a strong ebb under us. And the boat, which was white, must have been a very light one, for she heeled with every motion. At last we came to a great broad water, which perhaps was the river's mouth, with the sea beyond it. My father got frightened perhaps; and I know that I had been frightened long ago. By a turn of the eddy, we scrambled ashore, and carried the boy-baby with us; but the boat broke away with a lurch as we jumped, for we had not the sense to bring out the rope. In half a minute she was off to sea, and the girl-baby lay fast asleep in her stern. And now after such a long voyage in the dark, we were scared so that we both ran for our lives, and were safe before daybreak at Nympton.

"My father before we got home

stripped off the little boy's clothes, and buried them in a black moor-hole full of slime, with a great white stone in the midst of it. And the child himself was turned over naked to herd with the other children (for none of our women look after them), and nobody knew or cared to know who he was, or whence he came, except my poor father, and our master—and I myself, many years afterwards. But now I know well, and I cannot have quiet to die, without telling somebody. The boy-baby I was compelled to steal was Sir Philip Bampfylde's grandson, and the baby-girl his grand-daughter. I never heard what became of her. She must have been drowned, or starved, most likely. But as for the boy, he kept up his life; and the man who took us most in hand, of the name of 'Father David,' gave the names to all of us, and the little one 'Harry Savage,' now

serving on board of the *Vanguard*. I know nothing of the buried images found by Father David. My father had nothing to do with that. It may have been another of Chouane's plans. I know no more of anything. There, let me die, I have told all I know. I can write my nickname. I never had any other—*Jack Wildman*."

At the end of this followed the proper things, and the forms the law is made of, with first of all the sign-manual of our noble Captain Foley, who must have been an Irishman, to lead us into the battle of the Nile, while in the commission of the Peace. And after him Captain Bluett signed, and two or three warrant-officers gifted with a writing elbow; and then a pair of bare-bone crosses, meaning Cannibals Dick and Joe, who could not speak, and much less write, in the depth of their emotions.

CHAPTER LXII.—A RASH YOUNG CAPTAIN.

Now if I had been sewn up well in a hammock, and cast overboard (as the surgeon advised), who, I should like to know, would have been left capable of going to the bottom of these strange proceedings? Hezekiah was alive, of course, and prepared to swear to anything, especially after a round-shot must have killed him, but for his greasiness. And clever enough no doubt he was, and suspicious, and busy-minded, and expecting to have all Wales under his thumb, because he was somewhere about on the skirts of the great battle I led them into. But granting him skill, and that narrow knowledge of the world which I call "cunning;" granting him also a restless desire to get to the bottom of everything, and a sniffing sense like a turnspit-dog's, of the shank-end bone he is roast-

ing,—none the more for all that could we grant him the downright power, now loudly called for, to put two and two together.

Happily for all parties, poor Hezekiah was not required to make any further fool of himself. The stump of my arm was in a fine condition, when ordered home with the prizes; and as soon as I felt the old Bay of Biscay; over I knocked the doctor. He fitted me with a hook after this, in consistence with an old fisherman; and now I have such a whole boxful of tools to screw on, that they beat any hand I ever had in the world—if my neighbours would only not borrow them.

Tush—I am railing at myself again! Always running down, and holding up myself to ridicule, out of pure contrariety, just because every one else overvalues me. There are

better men in the world than myself; there are wiser; there are braver;—I will not be argued down about it—there are some (I am sure) as honest, in their way; and a few almost as truthful. However, I never yet did come across any other man half so modest. This I am forced to allude to now, in departure from my usual practice, because this quality and nothing else had prevented me from dwelling upon, and far more from following up, some shrewd thoughts which had occurred to me, loosely, I own, and in a random manner,—still they had occurred to me once or twice, and had been dismissed. Why so? Simply because I trusted other men's judgment, and public impression, instead of my own superior instinct, and knowledge of weather and tideways.

How bitterly it repented me now of this ill-founded diffidence, when, as we lay in the Chops of the Channel about the end of October, with a nasty head-wind baffling us, Captain Rodney Bluett came on board of us from the *Leader*! He asked if the doctor could report the *Master* as strong enough to support an interview; whereupon our worthy bone-joiner laughed, and showed him into me where I sate at the latter end of a fine sitch-bone of beef. And then Captain Rodney produced his papers, and told me the whole of his story. I was deeply moved by Jack Wildman's death, though edified much by the manner of it, and some of his last observations. For a naked heathen to turn so soon into a trousered Christian, and still more a good fore-top-man, was an evidence of unusual grace, even under such doctrine as mine was. Captain Bluett spoke much of this, although his religious convictions were not by any means so intense as mine, while my sinews were under treatment; but even

with only one arm and a quarter, I seemed to be better fitted to handle events than this young Captain was. His ability was of no common order, as he had proved by running his frigate under the very chains of the thundering big Frenchman, so that they could not be down on him. And yet he could not see half the bearings of Jack Wildman's evidence. We had a long talk, with some hot rum-and-water, for the evenings already were chilly; and my natural candour carried me almost into too much of it. And the Honourable Rodney gazed with a flush of colour at me, when I gave him my opinions, like a raking broadside.

"You may be right," he said; "you were always so wonderful at a long shot, Llewellyn. But really it does seem impossible."

"Captain," I answered; "how many things seem so, yet come to pass continually!"

"I cannot gainsay you, Llewellyn, after all my experience of the world. I would give my life to find it true. But how are we to establish it?"

"Leave me alone for that, Captain Bluett; if it can be done it shall be done. The idea is entirely my own, remember. It had never occurred to you, had it?"

"Certainly not," he replied, with his usual downright honesty; "my reason for coming to you with that poor fellow's dying testimony was chiefly to cheer you up with the proofs of our old Captain's innocence, and to show you the turn of luck for young Harry, who has long been so shamefully treated. And now I have another thing to tell you about him; that is if you have not heard it."

"No, I have heard nothing at all. I did not even know what had become of him, until you read Jack's

confession. With Nelson, on board the *Vanguard* !”

“That was my doing,” said the Honourable Rodney: “I recommended him to volunteer, and he was accepted immediately, with the character I gave him. But it is his own doing, and proud I am of it, that he is now junior lieutenant of Admiral Lord Nelson’s own ship the *Vanguard*. Just before Nelson received his wound, and while powder was being handed up, there came a shell hissing among them, and hung with a sputtering fuse in the coil of a cable, and the men fell down to escape it. But young Harry with wonderful quickness leaped (as he did, to save me in San Domingo), and sent the fuse over the side with a dash. Then Nelson came up, for the firing was hot, and of course he must be in the thick of it, and he saw in a moment what Harry had done, and he took down his name for promotion, being just what himself would have loved to do. It will have to be confirmed, of course; but of that there can be no question, after all that we have done; and when it turns out who he is.”

“I am heartily glad of it, Captain,” I cried; “the boy was worthy of any rank. Worth goes a little way; birth a long way. But all these things have to be lawfully proven.”

“Oh, you old village-lawyer; as we used to call you, at Old Newton. And you deserved it, you rogue, you did. You may have lost your left hand; but your right has not lost its cunning.” He spoke in the purest play and jest; and with mutual esteem we parted. Only I stipulated for a good talk with him about our measures, when I should have determined them; or at the latest on reaching port.

The boldest counsel is often the best, and naturally recommends it-

self to a man of warlike character. My first opinion, especially during the indignant period, was that nothing could be wiser, or more spirited, or more striking, than to march straight up to Parson Chowne and confront him with all this evidence, taken down by a magistrate, and dare him to deny it; and then hale him off to prison, and (if the law permitted) hang him. That this was too good for him, every one who has read my words must acknowledge; the best thing, moreover, that could befall him; for his body was good, though his soul was bad; and he might have some hopes to redeem the latter at the expense of the former. And if he had not, through life, looked forward to hanging as his latter end and salvation, it is quite impossible to account for the licence he allowed himself.

However, on second thoughts I perceived that the really weighty concern before us, and what we were bound to think first of, was to restore such a fine old family to its health and happiness. To reinstate, before he died, that noble and most kind-hearted man, full of religious feeling also, and of confidence that the Lord having made a good man would look after him—which is the very spirit of King David, when his self-respect returns—in a word, to replace in the world’s esteem, and (what matters far more) in true family love, that fine and pure old gentleman, the much-troubled Sir Philip Bampfylde,—this, I say, was the very first duty of a fellow nursed by a general and a baronet through the small-pox; while it was also a feat well worthy of the master of a line-of-battle ship, which was not last in the battle of the Nile. And scarcely second even to this was the duty and joy of restoring to their proper rank in life two horribly injured and innocent creatures, one of

whom was our own Bardie. Therefore, upon the whole, it seemed best to go to work very warily.

So it came to pass that I followed my usual practice of wholly forgetting myself; and receiving from the Honourable Rodney Bluett that most important document, I sewed it up in the watered-silk bag with my caul and other muniments, and set out for Narnton Court, where I found both Polly, and the cook, and the other comforts. But nothing would do for our Captain Rodney—all young men are so inconsiderate—except to be off at racing speed for Candleston Court, and his sweet-heart Delushy, and the excellent Colonel's old port wine. And as he was so briak, I will take him first, with your good leave, if ever words of mine can keep up with him. But of course you will understand that I tell what came to my knowledge afterwards.

With all the speed of men and horses, young Rodney Bluett made off for home, and when he got there his luck was such as to find Delushy in the house. It happened to be her visiting-time, according to the old arrangement, and this crafty sailor found it out from the fine old woman at the lodge. So what did he do but discharge his carriage, and leave all his kit with her, and go on, with the spright foot of a mariner, to the ancient house which he knew so well. Then this tall and bold young Captain entered by the butler's door, the trick of which was well known to him, and in a room out of the lobby he stood, without his own mother knowing it. It was the fall of autumnal night, when everything is so rich and mellow, when the waning daylight ebbs, like a great spring-tide exhausted, into the quickening flow of star-light. And the plates were being cleared away after a snug dinner-party.

The good Colonel sat at the head of his table, after the ladies' withdrawal, with that modest and graceful kindness, which is the sure mark of true blood. Around him were a few choice old friends, such as only good men have; friends, who would scout the evidence of their own eyes against him. According to our fine old fashion, these were drinking healths all round, not with undue love of report, so much as with truth and sincerity.

Rodney made a sign to Crumpy (who had been shaking him by both hands, until the tears prevented him), just to please to keep all quiet touching his arrival; and to let him have a slice or two of the haunch of venison put to grill, if there was any left of it, and give it him all on a plate: together with a twelve-pound loaf of farmhouse bread, such as is not to be had outside of Great Britain. This was done in about five minutes (for even Mrs Cook respected Crumpy); and being served up, with a quart of ale, in Crumpy's own head privacy, it had such a good effect that the Captain was ready to face anybody.

Old Crumpy was a most crafty old fellow—which was one reason why I liked him, as a contrast to my frankness—and he managed it all, and kept such a look-out, that no one suspected him of any more than an honoured old chum in his stronghold. Captain Bluett also knew exactly what his bearings were, and from a loftier point of view than would ever occur to Crumpy. A man who had carried a 50-gun ship right under the lower port-holes of a 120-gun enemy, and without any orders to that effect, and only from want of some easier business, he (I think) may be trusted to get on in almost anything.

This was the very thing—I do

believe—occurring to the mind of somebody sitting, as nearly as might be now, upon a very beautiful sofa. The loveliest work that you can imagine lay between her fingers; and she was doing her very best to carry it on consistently. But on her lap lay a London paper, full of the highest authority; and there any young eyes might discover a regular pit-pat of tears.

"My dear, my dear," said Lady Bluett, being not so very much better herself, although improved by spectacles; "it is a dreadful, dreadful thing to think of those poor Frenchmen killed, so many at a time, and all in their sins. I do hope they had time to think, ever so little, of their latter end. It makes me feel quite ill to think of such a dreadful carnage, and to know that my own son was foremost in it. Do you think, my dear, that your delicate throat would be any worse in the morning, if you were to read it once more to me? The people in the papers are so clever; and there was something I did not quite catch about poor Rodney's recklessness. How like his dear father, to be sure! I see him in every word of it."

"Auntie, the first time I read it was best. The second and third time, I cried worse and worse; and the fourth time, you know what you said of me. And I know that I deserved it, Auntie, for having such foolish weak eyes like that. You know what I told you about Captain Rodney, and begged you to let me come here no more. And you know what you said—that it was a child's fancy; and if it were not, it should take its course. The Colonel was wiser. Oh, Auntie, Auntie! why don't you always harken him?"

"For a very good reason, my dear child—he always proves wrong

in the end; and I don't. I have the very highest and purest respect for my dear brother's judgment. Every one knows what his mind is, and every one values his judgment. And no stranger, of course, can enter into him, his views, and his largeness, and intellect; as I do, when I agree with him. There, you have made me quite warm, my dear; I am so compelled to vindicate him."

"I am so sorry—I did not mean—you know what I am, Auntie."

"My dear, I know what you are, and therefore it is that I love you so. Now go and wash your pretty eyes, and read that again to me, and to the Colonel. Many mothers would be proud perhaps. I feel no pride whatever, because my son could not help doing it."

There was something else this excellent lady's son could not help doing. He caught the beautiful maid of Sker in her pure white dress in a nook of the passage, and with tears of pride for him rolling from her dark grey eyes, and he could not help—but all lovers, I trow, know how much to expect of him.

"Thank you, Rodney," Delushy cried; "to a certain extent, I am grateful. But, if you please, no more of it. And you need not suppose that I was crying about, about,—about anything."

"Of course not, you darling. How long have I lived, not to know that girls cry about nothing? nine times out of ten at least. Pearly tears, now prove your substance."

"Rodney, will you let me alone? I am not a French decker of 500 guns, for you to do just what you like with. And I don't believe any one knows you are here. Yes, yes, yes! Ever so many darlings, if you like—and 'with my whole heart I do love you,' as darling Moxy says. But one thing, this moment, I insist

upon—no, not in your ear, nor yet through your hair, you conceited curly creature; but at the distance of a yard I pronounce that you shall come to your mother."

"Oh, what a shame!" And with that unfilial view of the subject, he rendered himself, after all those mortal perils, into the arms of his mother. With her usual quickness Delushy fled, but came back to the drawing-room very sedately, and with a rose-coloured change of dress, in about half an hour afterwards.

"How do you do, Captain Rodney Bluett?"

"Madam, I hope that I see you well."

Lady Bluett was amazed at the coolness of them, and in her heart disappointed; although she was trying to argue it down, and to say to herself, "How wise of them!" She knew how the Colonel loved this young maid, yet never could bear to think of his nephew taking to wife a mere waif of the sea. The lady had faith in herself that she might in the end overcome this prejudice. But of course if the young ones had ceased to care for it, she could only say that young people were not of the stuff that young people used to be.

While she revolved these things in her tender, warm, and motherly bosom, the gentlemen came from the dining-room, to pay their compliments to the ladies, and to have their tea and all that, according to the recent style of it. They bowed very decently, as they came in, not being toppers by any means: and the lady of the house arose and curtsied to them most gracefully. Then Rodney, who had found occasion ere this to salute Colonel Lougher and his visitors, led forward the maid, and presented her to them, with a very excellent naval bow.

"My dear uncle, and friends of

the family," he began, while she trembled a little, and looked at him with astonishment; "allow me the favour of presenting to you a lady who will do me the honour of becoming my wife, very shortly I hope."

The Colonel drew back with a frown on his face. Lady Bluett on the other hand ran up.

"What is the meaning of this!" she cried. "And not a word of it to your own mother! Oh, Andalusia, how shocking of you!"

"I think, sir," said the Colonel, looking straight at the youth, "that you might have chosen a better moment to defy your uncle, than in the presence of his oldest friends. It is not like a gentleman, sir. It cuts me to the heart to say such a thing to the son of my own sister. But, sir, it is not like a gentleman."

The old friends nodded to one another, in approval of this sentiment: and turned to withdraw from a family scene.

"Wait, if you please," cried Rodney Bluett. "Colonel Lougher, I should deserve your reproach, if I had done anything of the kind. My intention is not to defy you, sir; but to please you and gratify you, my dear uncle, as your lifelong kindness to me and to this young lady deserves. And I have chosen to do it before old friends, that your pleasure may be increased by their congratulations. Instead of being ashamed, sir, of the origin of your future niece—or you my dear mother of your daughter, you may well be proud of it. She belongs to one of the oldest families in the west of England. She is the grandchild of Sir Philip Bampfylde of Narnton Court, near Barnstaple. And I think I have heard my mother speak of him as an old friend of my father."

"To be sure, to be sure!" ex-

claimed Lady Bluett, ere the Colonel could recover himself: "the Bluetts are an old west-country family; but the Bampfylde even older. Come to me, my pretty darling. There, don't cry so; or if you must, come in here, and I will help you. Rodney, my dear, you have delighted us, and you have done it most cleverly. But excuse my saying that an officer in the army would have known a little better what ladies are, than to have thrown them into this excitement, even in the presence of valued friends. Come here, my precious. The gentlemen will excuse us for a little while."

"Let me kiss Colonel Lougher first," whispered Delushy; all frightened, crying, and quivering as she was, she could not forget her gratitude. So she bowed her white forehead, and drooped her dark lashes under the old man's benevolent gaze.

"Sit down, my dear friends," said Colonel Lougher, as soon as the ladies had left the room. "My good nephew's tactics have been rather blunt, and of the Aboukir order. However, he may be quite

right if this matter requires at once to be spread abroad. At any rate, my dear boy, I owe you an apology. Rodney, I beg your pardon for the very harsh words I used to you."

With these words he stood up, and bowed to his nephew; who did the same to him in silence, and then they shook hands warmly. After which the young Captain told his story, to which they all listened in silence—five being justices of the shire, and one the lord lieutenant—all accustomed to examine evidence.

"It seems very likely," said Colonel Lougher, as they waited for his opinion. "That David Llewellyn is a most shrewd fellow. But he ought to have said more about the boat. There is one thing, however, to be done at once—to collect confirmative evidence."

"There is another thing to be done at once," cried Rodney Bluett, warmly—"to pull Chowne's nose. And despite his cloth, I will do it roundly."

"My young friend," said the Lord Lieutenant; "prove it first. And then, I think, there are some people who would pardon you."

HAUD IMMÉMOR.—THACKERAY IN AMERICA.

[THE following American tribute to the memory of Thackeray was written long ago—its date being May 1864, the darkest hour of the Civil War. The sad associations of those days of sorrow and other circumstances prevented it from being sooner given to the world; and in the eight years which have intervened, love and veneration for the great novelist have gone on in growth. This Memorial is now published with the full consent of the author.*]

MR THACKERAY (who that has heard him, with sweetness of voice unequalled, speak of Mr Joseph Addison, and Mr Congreve, and Mr Fielding, and Mr Atterbury; who that has read 'Henry Esmond,' or 'The Virginians,'—will find fault with me for so describing him?) came to Philadelphia on his first visit to America in the month of January 1853. My impression is that he brought very few letters of personal introduction, and was rather careless of what may be called "social success," though anxious about the work he had in hand—his course of lectures on the English Humorists—and, as he used to say, "the dollars he wished to make, not for himself, but for his little girls at home." With or without letters, he soon made friends, on the hearts of whom the news of his death has struck a sharp pang. As one of them, I venture to jot down a few memories of him who is gone.

The lectures were very successful. There are two classes of people in every American microcosm—those who run after celebrities, and those, resolute not to be pleased, who run, as it were, against them. All were won or conquered by his simple

naturalness; and, as I have said, the lectures were a great success.

My personal relations to him happened to become very intimate. He seemed to take a fancy to me and mine, and I naturally loved him dearly. He used to come to my house, not the abode of wealth or luxury, almost every day, and often more than once a-day. He talked with my little children, and told them odd fairy tales; and I now see him (this was on his second visit) one day in Walnut Street walking slowly along with my little girl by the hand—the tall, grey-haired, spectacled man with an effort accommodating himself to the toddling child by his side; and then he would bring her home: and one day when we were to have a great dinner at the club given to him, and my wife was ill, and my household disarranged, and the bell rang, and I said to him, "I must go and carve the boiled mutton for the children, and take for granted you do not care to come;" and he got up, and, with a cheery voice, said, "I love boiled mutton and children too, and I will dine with them," and we did; and he was happy, and the children were happy, and our appetite for the

* The author of the Memorial is Mr William B. Reed of Philadelphia, once well known throughout our Eastern Empire as United States' Minister in China in Lord Elgin's time. He intrusted the MS. to a friend, whose pleasure in its perusal last winter in America, first suggested to Mr Reed its publication in this country.

club dinner was damaged. Such was Thackeray in my home.

I met him once at the house of a friend, and there happened to be an odd collocation at the table. There was a guest, a man of brilliant talent, of mature age, and high education, measured at least by our American standard, who was marked by two peculiarities—his remarkable physical resemblance to Thackeray, and the fact that, although upwards of fifty years of age, born and bred in Kentucky, he had never before crossed the Alleghanies, and never until that very day seen a ship or any square-rigged vessel. They—the bright backwoodsman, who had never looked upon the ocean, and the veteran Londoner, who had made a voyage from India before the days of steam, and had seen a fat man in white clothes and a big straw hat at St Helena called “Buonaparte”—were a charming contrast. The year 1863 carried both to their graves—one in Kensal Green, and the other on the banks of the Ohio.

It was a bright moonlight night on which we (Thackeray and I) walked home from that dinner; and I remember well the walk and the place, for I seem to localise all my associations with him, and I asked him what, perhaps, he might have thought the absurd question, “What do you honestly think of my country? or rather, what has most struck you in America? Tell me candidly, for I shall not be at all angry or hurt if it be unfavourable, or much elated if it be not.” And then his answer, as he stopped (we were walking along Penn Square), and, turning round to me, said: “You know what a virtue-proud people we English are. We think we have got it all to ourselves. Now that which most impresses me here is, that I find homes as pure as ours, firesides like ours, domestic virtues as gentle;

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the English language, though the accent be a little different, with its home-like melody; and the Common Prayer Book in your families. I am more struck by pleasant resemblances than by anything else.” And so I sincerely believe he was.

There was a great deal of dining out while “the great satirist,” as we used to address him, was here; but although always genial, I do not think, according to my recollection, he was a brilliant conversationalist. Those who expected much were often disappointed. It was in close private intercourse he was delightful. Once—it was in New York—he gave a dinner, at which I was a guest, to what are called “literary men,”—authors, and lawyers, and actors (two very accomplished ones, and most estimable gentlemen—one still living), and editors, and magazine men. Then he made what seemed to be an effort. He talked for the table. He sang some odd post-prandial songs; one in a strange sort of a “recitative” about Doctor Martin Luther. But, as I have said, it was an effort, and I liked him better at home and alone. It was on this occasion, or rather on our return journey to Philadelphia, that, on board the steamboat (here again am I localising), he spoke to me of domestic sorrows and anxieties too sacred to be recorded here. And yet it was this man whom vulgar-minded people called heartless! As he thus talked to me, I thought of lines of tenderness, often quoted, which no one but he could have written:—

“Ah me! how quick the days are sitting!
I mind me of a time that’s gone,
When here I’d sit, as now I’m sitting,
In this same place, but not alone.
A fair young form was nestled near me,
A dear, dear face looked fondly up,
And sweetly spoke and smiled to cheer
me,—

There’s no one now to share my cup.”

2 Y

It is no part of this little Memorial to refer to what may be called his public relations and his success as a lecturer. I merely record my recollection of the peculiar voice and cadence; the exquisite manner of reading poetry; the elocution, matchless in its simplicity; his tranquil attitude—the only movement of his hands being when he wiped his glasses as he began and turned over the leaves of his manuscript; his gentle intonations. There was sweet music in his way of repeating the most hackneyed lines, which freshened them anew. I seem still to hear him say,—

“And nightly to the listening earth
Repeats the story of her birth.”

Or, in his lecture on Pope,—

“Lo! thy dread empire, chaos! is restored;
Light dies before thy uncreating word.

Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall,
And universal darkness buries all!”

But to resume my personal recollections. He was too sincere a man to talk for effect, or to pay compliments; and on his first visit to America, he seemed so happy, and so much pleased with all he met, that I fancied he might be tempted to come and for a time live amongst us. The British Consulate in Philadelphia became vacant, the incumbent, Mr William Peter, dying suddenly; and it seems from the following note, written at Washington, that I urged him to take the place if he could get it. I give the note exactly as it was written, venturing even to retain the names of those whom he kindly remembered; and Philadelphians of the old school will smile at the misspelling of the name of the founder of the Wister parties of our ancient days.—

“MR ANDERSON'S MUSIC STORE, PENNS AVENUE (1853),
Friday.

“MY DEAR REED,—(I withdraw the Mr as wasteful and ridiculous excess, and gilding of refined gold), and thank you for the famous autograph and the kind letter enclosing it, and the good wishes you form for me. There are half-a-dozen houses I already know in Philadelphia where I could find very pleasant friends and company; and that good old library would give me plenty of acquaintances more. But, home among my parents there, and some few friends I have made in the last twenty-five years, and a tolerably fair prospect of an honest livelihood on the familiar London flagstones, and the library at the Athenæum, and the ride in the Park, and the pleasant society afterwards; and a trip to Paris now and again, and to Switzerland and Italy in the summer,—these are little temptations which make me not discontented with my lot, about which I grumble only for pastime, and because it is an Englishman's privilege. Own now that all these recreations here enumerated have a pleasant sound. † I hope I shall live to enjoy them yet a little while before I go to ‘*nox et domus exilis Plutonia*,’ whither poor, kind, old Peter has vanished. So that Saturday I was to have dined with him, and Mrs Peter wrote, saying he was ill with influenza: he was in bed with his last illness, and there were to be no more Whister parties for him. Will Whister himself, hospitable, pigtailed shade, welcome him to Hades? And will they sit down—no, stand up—to a ghostly supper, devouring the *σθόμιμος ψυχας* of oysters and all sorts of birds? I never feel pity for a man dying, only for survivors, if there be such passionately deploring him. You see the pleasures the undersigned proposes to himself here in future years—

sight of the Alps, a holiday on the Rhine, a ride in the Park, a colloquy with pleasant friends of an evening. If it is death to part with these delights (and pleasures they are, and no mistake), sure the mind can conceive others afterwards; and I know one small philosopher who is quite ready to give up these pleasures; quite content (after a pang or two of separation from dear friends here) to put his hand into that of the summoning angel, and say, 'Lead on, O messenger of God our Father, to the next place whither the divine goodness calls us!' We must be blindfolded before we can pass, I know; but I have no fear about what is to come, any more than my children need fear that the love of *their* father should fail them. I thought myself a dead man once, and protest the notion gave me no disquiet about myself—at least, the philosophy is more comfortable than that which is tinctured with brimstone.

"The Baltimoreans flock to the stale old lectures as numerous as you of Philadelphia. Here the audiences are more polite than numerous, but the people who do come are very well pleased with their entertainment. I have had many dinners. Mr Everett, Mr Fish—our minister, ever so often—the most hospitable of envoys. I have seen no one at all in Baltimore, for it is impossible to *do* the two towns together; and from this I go to Richmond and Charlestown, not to New Orleans, which is too far; and I hope you will make out your visit to Washington, and that we shall make out a meeting more satisfactory than that dinner at New York, which did not come off. The combination failed which I wanted to bring about. Have you heard Miss Furness of Philadelphia sing? She is the best ballad-singer I ever heard. And will you please remember me to Mrs Reed and your brother, and Wharton, and Lewis and his pretty young daughter; and believe me ever faithfully yours, dear Reed,

"W. M. THACKERAY."

The "famous autograph" was, if my memory does not mislead me, a letter of Washington, for which he had expressed a wish, and which I gladly gave him; and the plan of coming to America, as will be seen, though at first rejected, seems to have taken root in his mind.

Thackeray left us in the winter of 1853, and in the summer of the year was on the Continent with his daughters. In the last chapter of 'The Newcomes,' published in 1855, he says: "Two years ago, walking with my children in some pleasant fields near to Berne, in Switzerland, I strayed from them into a little wood; and coming out of it presently told them how the story had been revealed to me somehow, which for three-and-twenty months the reader has been pleased to follow." It was

on this Swiss tour that he wrote me the following characteristic letter, filled with kindly recollections of convivial hours in Philadelphia, of headaches which he had contributed to administer, and of friends whose society he cherished. On the back of this note is a pen-and-ink caricature of which he was not conscious when he began to write. It is what he alludes to as "the rubbishing picture which I didn't see." The sketch is very spirited, and, as a friend to whom I have shown it reminds me, evidently is the original of one of the illustrations of his grotesque fairy tale of 'The Rose and the Ring,' written, so he told a member of my family years afterwards, while he was watching and nursing his children, who were ill during this vacation ramble.

"NEUFCHÂTEL, SWITZERLAND, July 21, 1853.

"MY DEAR REED,—Though I am rather slow in paying the tailor, I always pay him: and as with tailors, so with men; I pay my debts to my friends, only at rather a long day. Thank you for writing to me so kindly, you who have so much to do. I have only begun to work ten days since, and now in consequence have a little leisure. Before, since my return from the West, it was flying from London to Paris, and *vice versa*, dinners right and left, parties every night. If I had been in Philadelphia, I could scarcely have been more feasted. Oh, you unhappy Reed! I see you (after that little supper with McMichael) on Sunday, at your own table, when we had that good Sherry-Madeira, turning aside from the wine-cup with your pale face! That cup has gone down this well so often [meaning my own private cavity], that I wonder the cup isn't broken, and the well as well as it is.

"Three weeks of London were more than enough for me, and I feel as if I had had enough of it and pleasure. Then I remained a month with my parents; then I brought my girls on a little pleasuring tour, and it has really been a pleasuring tour. We spent ten days at Baden, when I set intrepidly to work again; and have been five days in Switzerland now; not bent on going up mountains, but on taking things easily. How beautiful it is! How pleasant! How great and affable, too, the landscape is! It's delightful to be in the midst of such scenes—the ideas get generous reflections from them. I don't mean to say my thoughts grow mountainous and enormous like the Alpine chain yonder; but, in fine, it is good to be in the presence of this noble nature. It is keeping good company; keeping away mean thoughts. I see in the papers now and again accounts of fine parties in London. *Bon Dieu!* is it possible any one ever wanted to go to fine London parties, and are there now people sweating in Mayfair routs? The European continent swarms with your people. They are not all as polished as Chesterfield. I wish some of them spoke French a little better. I saw five of them at supper at Basle the other night with their knives down their throats. It was awful! My daughter saw it, and I was obliged to say, 'My dear, your great-great-grandmother, one of the finest ladies of the old school I ever saw, always applied cold steel to her wittles. It's no *crime* to eat with a knife,' which is all very well: but I wish five of 'em at a time wouldn't.

"Will you please beg McMichael, when Mrs Glyn, the English tragic actress, comes to read Shakespeare in your city, to call on her, do the act of kindness to her, and help her with his valuable editorial aid? I wish we were to have another night soon, and that I was going this very evening to set you up with a headache to-morrow morning. By Jove! how kind you all were to me! How I like people, and want to see 'em again! You are more tender-hearted, romantic, sentimental, than we are. I keep on telling this to our fine people here, and have so belaboured your [Here the paper was turned and revealed the sketch. At the top is written: "Pardon this rubbishing picture; but I didn't see, and can't afford to write page 3 over again."] country with praise in private that I sometimes think I go too far. I keep back some of the truth, but the great point to try and ding into the ears of the great stupid virtue-proud English public is, that there are folks as good as they in America. That's where Mrs Stowe's book has done harm, by inflaming us with an idea of

our own superior virtue in freeing our blacks, whereas you keep yours. Comparisons are always odorous, Mrs Malaprop says.

"I am about a new story, but don't know as yet if it will be any good. It seems to me I am too old for story-telling; but I want money, and shall get 20,000 dollars for this, of which (D.V.) I'll keep fifteen. I wish this rubbish (the sketch) were away; I might put written rubbish in its stead. Not that I have anything to say, but that I always remember you and yours, and honest Mac, and Wharton, and Lewis, and kind fellows who have been kind to me, and I hope will be kind to me again. —Good-bye, my dear Reed, and believe me ever sincerely yours,

"W. M. THACKERAY."

The next year, 1854, was a year of sorrow to me and mine. But for the sympathy which, in that overpowering grief, I had from my friend, I should not allude to it. My only surviving brother, Mr Henry Reed, in company with his wife's sister, visited Europe, saw, and were kindly treated by, Mr Thackeray; and on their return voyage, on the 24th September, perished in the shipwreck of the Arctic. Thackeray had known my brother in this country, and duly estimated what I may be pardoned for describing as his gentle virtues and refined and schol-

ar-like tastes. He measured, too, the anguish which, even at this lapse of time—now nearly ten years—freshens when I think of it, and which then bowed a whole family to the earth. It was in reply to my letter announcing that all hope of rescue or escape was over, and that "a vast and wandering grave was theirs," that in November he wrote to me the following. It is an interesting letter, too, in this, that it mentions what may not be known on the other side of the Atlantic—that he had had some transient diplomatic visions.

"ONSLow SQUARE, BROMPTON, *November 8.*

"MY DEAR REED,—I received your melancholy letter this morning. It gives me an opportunity of writing about a subject on which, of course, I felt very strongly for you and for your poor brother's family. I have kept back writing, knowing the powerlessness of consolation, and having I don't know what vague hopes that your brother and Miss Bronson might have been spared. That ghastly struggle over, who would pity any man that departs? It is the survivors one commiserates of such a good, pious, tender-hearted man as he seemed whom God Almighty has just called back to Himself. He seemed to me to have all the sweet domestic virtues which make the pang of parting only the more cruel to those who are left behind. But that loss, what a gain to him! A just man summoned by God,—for what purpose can he go but to meet the divine love and goodness? I never think about deploring such; and as you and I send for our children, meaning them only love and kindness, how much more Pater Noster? So we say, and weep the beloved ones whom we lose all the same with the natural selfish sorrow; as you, I daresay, will have a heavy heart when your daughter marries and leaves you. You will lose her, though her new home is ever so happy. I remember quite well my visit to your brother—the pictures in his room, which made me see which way his thoughts lay; his sweet, gentle, melan-

eholy, pious manner. That day I saw him here in Dover Street, I don't know whether I told them, but I felt at the time that to hear their very accents affected me somehow. They were just enough American to be national; and where shall I ever hear voices in the world that have spoken more kindly to me? It was like being in your grave, calm, kind old Philadelphia over again; and behold! now they are to be heard no more. I only saw your brother once in London. When he first called I was abroad ill, and went to see him immediately I got your letter, which he brought and kept back, I think. We talked about the tour which he had been making, and about churches in this country—which I knew interested him—and Canterbury especially, where he had been at the opening of a missionary college. He was going to Scotland, I think, and to leave London instantly, for he and Miss B. refused hospitality, &c.; and we talked about the memoir of Hester Reed which I had found, I didn't know how, on my study-table, and about the people whom he had met at Lord Mahon's—and I believe I said I should like to be going with him in the Arctic. And we parted with a great deal of kindness, please God, and friendly talk of a future meeting. May it happen one day! for I feel sure he was a just man. I wanted to get a copy of 'Esmond' to send by him (the first edition, which is the good one); but I did not know where to light on one, having none myself, and a month since bought a couple of copies at a circulating library for 7s. 6d. apiece.

"I am to-day just out of bed after another, about the dozenth, severe fit of spasms, which I have this year. My book would have been written but for them, and the lectures begun, with which I hope to make a few thousand more dollars for those young ladies. But who knows whether I shall be well enough to deliver them, or what is in store for next year? The secretaryship of our legation at Washington was vacant the other day, and I instantly asked for it; but in the very kindest letter Lord Clarendon showed how the petition was impossible. First, the place was given away; next, it would not be fair to appoint out of the service. But the first was an excellent reason, not a doubt of it. So if ever I come, as I hope and trust to do this time next year, it must be at my own cost, and not the Queen's.—Good-bye, my dear Reed, and believe that I have the utmost sympathy in your misfortune, and am most sincerely yours,

"W. M. THACKERAY."

The copy of 'Esmond' was for my wife, who had expressed her liking for it beyond all his works. It came the next year thus inscribed:

"With the grateful regards of
W. M. THACKERAY.
LONDON, *October 1855.*"

And is now among the most cherished volumes in our library.

In the winter of 1855, Mr Thackeray made his second and last visit to this country, and gave us the first-

fruits of his new lecture experiment, "The Georges." I met him in New York and heard his "George IV."—to my mind the least agreeable of the course—delivered before a literary society in Brooklyn. He thence came to Philadelphia, and renewed his old intimacies and associations. His friends were glad to see him, and he them. The impression we all had was that two years had oldened him more than they should have done; but there was no change

in other respects. "The Georges" were, if possible, a greater success than "The Humorists;" though I confess I had, and have, a lurking preference for the genial communion with Steele and Fielding (his great favourites), and Swift and Sterne (his aversions), to the dissection of the tainted remains of the Hanoverian kings. But there was in one of these lectures a passage familiar to every listener and every hearer which I reproduce here, not merely from an association presently to be referred to, but because it seems to me in transcribing it that I have the dead again before me, and hear a sweet voice in the very printed words:—

"What preacher need moralise on this story; what words save the simplest are requisite to tell it? It is too terrible for tears. The thought of such a misery smites me down in submission before the Ruler of kings and men, the Monarch supreme over empires and republics, the inscrutable Disposer of life, death, happiness, victory. O brothers! speaking the same dear mother tongue. O comrades! enemies no more, let us take a mournful hand together, as

we stand by this royal corpse and call a truce to battle! Low he lies to whom the proudest used to kneel once, and who was cast lower than the poorest: dead, whom millions prayed for in vain. Driven off his throne; buffeted by rude hands; with his children in revolt; the darling of his old age killed before him untimely; our Lear hangs over her breathless lips and cries, 'Cordelia, Cordelia, stay a little!'

'Vex not his ghost!—Oh let him pass—
He hates him
That would upon the rack of this tough
world
Stretch him out longer!'

Hush! strife and quarrel, over the solemn grave! Sound, trumpets, a mournful march! Fall, dark curtain, upon his pageant, his pride, his grief, his awful tragedy!"

Was it this, or was it the other passage about the Princess Amelia and the old King praying for returning reason, which Thackeray referred to in the following note, written to me from Baltimore, in answer to one sending an adverse criticism in a small newspaper of Philadelphia?

"BALTIMORE, Jan. 16, 1856.

"MY DEAR REED,—Your letter of the 9th, with one from Boston of the 8th, was given to me last night when I came home. In what possible snow-drift have they been lying torpid? One hundred thanks for your goodness in the lecture, and all other matters; and if I can find the face to read those printed lectures over again, I'll remember your good advice. That splendid crowd on the last lecture night I knew would make our critical friend angry. I have not seen the last article, of course, and don't intend to look for it. And as I was reading the George III. lecture here on Monday night, could not help asking myself, 'What can the man mean by saying that I am uncharitable, unkindly—that I sneer at virtue?' and so forth. My own conscience being pretty clear, I can receive the 'Bulletin's' displeasure with calmness—remembering how I used to lay about me in my own youthful days, and how I generally took a good tall mark to hit at.

"Wicked weather, and an opera company which performed on the two first lecture nights here, made the audiences rather thin; but they fetched

up at the third lecture, and to-night is the last; after which I go to Richmond, then to go further south, from Charleston to Havannah and New Orleans; perhaps to turn back and try westward, where I know there is a great crop of dollars to be reaped. But to be snow-bound in my infirm condition! I might never get out of the snow alive.

"I go to Washington to-morrow for a night. I was there and dined with Crampton on Saturday. He was in good force and spirits, and I saw no signs of packing-up or portmanteaus in the hall.

"I send my best regards to Mrs Reed and your sister-in-law, and Lewis and his kind folks, and to Mac's whisky-punch, which gave me no headache: I'm very sorry it treated you so unkindly.—Always yours, dear Reed.
W. M. THACKERAY."

The allusion in this letter to the printed lectures recalls a little incident which was very illustrative of his generous temper, and is not unlike "the pill-box with the guineas," which I have seen lately in some literary notices. It was this: On his return to Philadelphia, in the spring of 1856, from the south and west, a number of his friends—I as much as any one—urged him, unwisely as it turned out, to repeat his lectures on "The Humorists." He was very loath to do it, but finally yielded, being, I doubt not, somewhat influenced by the pecuniary inducements accidentally held out to him. A young bookseller of this city offered him a round sum—not very large, but, under the circumstances, quite liberal—for the course, which he accepted. The experiment was a failure. It was late in the season, with long days and shortening nights, and the course *was* a stale one, and the lectures had been printed, and the audiences were thin, and the bargain was disastrous, not to him, but to the young gentleman who had ventured it. We were all disappointed and mortified; but Thackeray took it good-humouredly: the only thing that seemed

to disturb him being his sympathy with the man of business. "I don't mind the empty benches, but I cannot bear to see that sad, pale-faced young man as I come out, who is losing money on my account." This he used to say at my house when he came home to a frugal and not very cheerful supper after the lectures. Still the bargain had been fairly made, and was honourably complied with; and the money was paid and remitted, through my agency, to him at New York. I received no acknowledgment of the remittance, and recollect well that I felt not a little annoyed at this; the more so, when, on picking up a newspaper, I learned that Thackeray had sailed for home. The day after he had gone, when there could be no refusal, I received a certificate of deposit on his New York bankers for an amount quite sufficient to meet any loss incurred, as he thought, on his behalf. I give the accompanying note, merely suppressing the name of the gentleman in question. There are some little things in this note—its blanks and dates—to which a *fac-simile* alone would do justice:—

"April 24.

; "MY DEAR REED,—When you get this, . . . remumnum-ember

me to kick-kick-kind ffu-ffu-ffriends . . . a sudden resolution—to—mummum-morrow . . . in the Bu-bu-baltic.

"Good-bye, my dear kind friend, and all kind friends in Philadelphia. I didn't think of going away when I left home this morning; but it's the best way.

"I think it is best to send back 25 per cent to poor —. Will you kindly give him the enclosed; and depend on it I shall go and see Mrs Best when I go to London, and tell her all about you. My heart is uncommonly heavy: and I am yours gratefully and affectionately.

"W. M. T."

And thus, with an act and words of kindness, he left America, never to return!

It was during this visit to the United States that, as he told me, the idea of his American novel, 'The Virginians,' was conceived; and I have reason to think that some of the details in the story were due as well to Mr Prescott's 'Crossed Swords' as to conversations with me at a time when my mind was full of historical associations and suggestions, and when to think of my country's story was matter of pride and pleasure. In the letter of November 1854, on my brother's death, Mr Thackeray speaks of 'The Memoirs of Hester Reed,' which he had found on his study-table. This was a little volume, privately printed a few years before, containing the biography of my paternal grandmother, Esther de Berdt, a young English girl, who had made the acquaintance of her American lover when, in colony times, he was a student in the Temple. They married—came to this country: he became a soldier of the Revolution, and she, sharing her husband's feelings and opinions and trials, died, still a young woman, in the middle of the war. As I have said, Esther Reed was my father's mother. Mr Thackeray seemed pleased with the genuineness of the little book, and talked often of it. The names "Hetty"

and "Theodosia" (the latter, I believe, in his family also), which appear in 'The Virginians,' are to be found in my homely narrative of revolutionary times. One other suggestion I trace in 'The Virginians.' I recollect in one of our rambles telling him of a book which he did not seem to know; and I can hardly say that it is to my credit that I did — 'The Memoirs of the Duke de Lauzun.' We spoke of the dispute as to its genuineness (its authenticity as a record of the intrigues of a courtier of Louis XV. there was no reason to doubt), and I called his attention to the fact, very creditable to my countrywomen of ancient days, that while Lauzun's life, not only in France, where it was natural enough, but in England, was a continuity of atrocious licentiousness, with his victim's names revealed as only a Frenchman of that day was capable of doing, the moment he lands in America, accompanying Rochambeau's army to Rhode Island, the wicked spirit seems rebuked by the purity and simplicity of American women; and though he mentions the names of several ladies whom he met, there is not a word of indecorum or whispered thought of impurity. This idea the reader will find stated in 'The Virginians' thus:—

"There lived during the last century a certain French duke and

marquis who distinguished himself in Europe, and America likewise, and has obliged posterity by leaving behind him a choice volume of memoirs, which the gentle reader is specially warned not to consult. Having performed the part of Don Juan in his own country, in ours, and in other parts of Europe, he has kindly noted down the names of many court beauties who fell victims to his powers of fascination; and very pleasing, no doubt, it must be for the grandsons and descendants of the fashionable persons among whom our brilliant nobleman moved, to find the names of their ancestresses adorning M. le Duc's sprightly pages, and their frailties recorded by the candid writer who caused them. In the course of the peregrinations of this nobleman he visited North America, and, as had been his custom in Europe, proceeded straightway to fall in love. And curious it is to contrast the elegant refinements of European society—where, according to Monseigneur, he had but to lay siege to a woman in order to vanquish her—with the simple lives and habits of the colonial folks, amongst whom the European enslaver of hearts did not, it appears, make a single conquest. Had he done so, he would as certainly have narrated his victories in Pennsylvania and New England as he described his successes in this and his own country. Travellers in America have cried quite loudly enough against the rudeness and barbarism of Transatlantic manners; let the present writer give the humble testimony of his experience, that the conversation of American gentlemen is generally modest, and, to the best of his belief, the lives of the women pure."

'The Virginians' appeared in monthly numbers while I was ab-

sent on my mission to China in 1858, and there I read it. In the tone of, I hope pardonable, egotism in which I have thus far written, I transcribe an entry in the little diary I kept in the East for the amusement of my wife and family at home:—

"*Friday, July 23, Shanghai.*—Read to-day No. VII. of 'The Virginians.' I still like it, though I fear my friend Lord Chesterfield will fare badly. I don't care what is said about old Q., or any of the Selwyn party. In one of his letters (this I have lost or mislaid, or some felonious autograph-hunter has purloined it) to me long ago, Thackeray, when he was projecting 'The Virginians,' told me he should use 'Esther de Berdt;' and now see his heroines are 'Hetty' and 'Theodosia,' and from the same rank of life—almost the only pure one then—to which my 'Hetty' belonged. But what beautiful heart-stirring things one meets in his books! I can't help copying one: 'Canst thou, O friendly reader, count upon the fidelity of an artless or tender heart or two, and reckon among the blessings which Heaven hath bestowed on thee the love of faithful women? Purify thy own heart, and try to make it worthy theirs. On thy knees—on thy knees, give thanks for the blessings awarded thee! All the blessings of life are nothing compared with that one—all the rewards of ambition, pleasure, wealth, only vanity and disappointment, grasped at greedily, and fought for fiercely, and over and over again found worthless by the weary winners. But love seems to survive life, and to reach beyond it. I think we take it with us past the grave. Do we not still give it to those who have left us? May we not hope that they feel it for us, and that we shall leave it here in

one or two fond bosoms when we also are gone?' You will think I have very little to do or record to have time to make so long extracts; but I could not help it, for the magic words touched me."

On my appointment to China, Thackeray was among the first to congratulate me, at the same time begging me—as he seemed to take for granted that my route to the East would be what, by an odd misnomer, is called the "overland"—

to stop with him in London. I went, however, by the Cape of Good Hope, and it was not till my return in the spring of 1859 that we met again. From Malta, or some point on the Continent, I wrote to ask him, having due regard to economy, my party being numerous, and to the odour of official station which still hung round me, to get me suitable lodgings in London, and the following perfectly characteristic note was the answer :—

"MAURIGY'S HOTEL, 1 REGENT STREET, WATERLOO PLACE,
April 2, 1859.

"MY DEAR REED,—This is the best place for you, I think. Two bishops already in the house. Country-gentlefolks and American envoys especially affect it. Mr Maurigy says you may come for a day at the rate of some ten guineas a-week, with rooms very clean and nice, which I have just gone over, and go away at the day's end if you disapprove.

"This letter [*referring to one enclosed*] is about the Athenæum, where you may like to look in. I wrote to Lord Stanhope, who is on the committee, to put you up.

"I won't bore you by asking you to dinner till we see how matters are, as of course you will consort with bigger wigs than yours always,

"W. M. THACKERAY."

No "bigger wigs" came between us. During my fortnight in London—for I was hastening home after two years' absence—we saw him nearly every day. He came regularly to our quarters, went with me to the Athenæum—that spot of brilliant association—where he pointed out the eminent men of whom I had heard and read; and then he would go to his working-table in the Club Library and write for the 'Cornhill.' He would carry my son, a young man just of age, off with him to see the London world in odd "haunts." I dined with him twice: once at his modest house in Onslow Square, where we had the great pleasure of seeing his daughters; and once at Greenwich, at a bachelor's dinner, where I made the acquaintance, since ripened into intimacy,

of another friend, who I am sure will excuse this distant allusion to him. We looked out on the Park, and the river where the Great Eastern was lying before her first voyage, and talked of America and American associations, and of the chance of his coming again. And our last dinner was over. I left London on the 30th April 1859. Mr and Miss Thackeray were at the Euston Square station to say farewell. He took my son aside, and to his infinite confusion handed him a little *cadeau*, which I hope he will always cherish with pride for the sake of the giver. "We parted with a great deal of kindness, please God, and friendly talk of a future meeting. May it happen one day; for I feel sure he was a just man."

My pious duty is nearly done.

On my return to America our correspondence naturally enough languished: each was much occupied; he with drudgery which was exhausting and engrossing. I often received kind messages and sometimes apologies. After the Civil War began, no letter passed between us. I had not the heart to write, and I don't believe he had; for I reject with emphasis the idea that his gentle nature could feel aught but horror at this war of brethren—"brothers speaking the same dear mother tongue." His American novel and his pictures of life in ancient days at Castlewood on the Potomac, show this abundantly. He had been in the South and met Southern ladies and gentlemen, the highest types of American civilisation. This I may say now in their hour of suffering and possible disaster. He had visited Southern homes and shared Southern hospitality.

As recently as February 1862, in one of his fugitive essays, he referred to an incident of our days of sorrow, and thus embalmed his affectionate regard for a distant friend on whom the hand of arbitrary power was, or was supposed to be, laid. I have reason to believe the reference was to a gentleman long a resident of Savannah.

"I went to the play one night, and protest I hardly knew what was the entertainment which passed before my eyes. In the next stall was an American gentleman who knew me. . . . And the Christmas piece which the actors were

playing proceeded like a piece in a dream. To make the grand comic performance doubly comic, my neighbour presently informed me how one of the best friends I had in America—the most hospitable, kindly, amiable of men, from whom I had twice received the warmest welcome, and the most delightful hospitality—was a prisoner in Fort Warren on charges by which his life might be risked. I think it was the most dismal Christmas piece these eyes ever looked on."

One other memorandum I did receive from my friend. In the summer of 1863 an Anglo-Indian officer brought me the following note written on one of the little book-slips used in the Reading-Room of the British Museum.

"At sight pay any kindness you can to the bearer, Major F. Goldsmith, and debit the same to your old friend,

"W. M. THACKERAY."

My little Memorial is finished. I have written it, in a frame of mind distracted by all that in these last few days has been going on around me, with two objects: one, to embalm, I trust not unpleasantly to any one, the memories I happen to have of a friend who was dear to me; the other, to try by a desperate intellectual effort to throw aside, if but for a moment (and the date will show why I feel so), the burden of consciousness that bloody deeds are now doing which will bring new sorrow into many a home.

May 14, 1864.

ZANZIBAR: A REVIEW.

THE interest of the reading world in genuine books of travel must increase year by year. Such works were always esteemed, and, by gratifying a laudable curiosity, did notable service in amusing and instructing those who could read, and those who would listen. Herodotus reciting his history at the Olympic games amid the applause of thousands, rises before us as we write; and this age knows well, by what it has heard with its ears, and by what former ages have transmitted to it, how the histories of adventurers and explorers from Herodotus downwards, have ever commanded a degree of attention which no other class of books could with certainty obtain. Of old it was felt on both sides—by writers and by contemporary readers of books of travels—that the readers were never likely to see, or to be much further informed concerning, the regions which the traveller had visited: hence the histories had a tendency to be more or less fabulous, and it did not greatly matter to those who learned from them whether in all points they were exact or not. A licence was accorded to travellers. But it is otherwise now. So rapid is the march of discovery and colonisation, that the untrodden waste of to-day may blossom as the home of thriving Europeans before half a century has passed. Not a track is hit now by the pioneers of science whereon some now living, and near and dear to us, may not one day be sojourners or dwellers. Hence modern travels must recommend themselves to us much more than did older travels to our fathers. We have the same delight as they had in becoming acquainted with things strange and new; and we have the inter-

esting consciousness, which they had not, that the new lands may closely affect our fortunes or those of our near kindred. Appetite for accounts of travels has, therefore, certainly not diminished as the world has advanced in years: only we desire nowadays not only to be informed, but to be plainly and accurately informed concerning things which may touch us so nearly. The traveller's licence is rescinded. We not only do not allow him to take any liberty with facts, but we tolerate no fanciful colouring for the sake of sensation or expansion; still less do we allow of perplexing and marring what should be a clear, simple, and honest description, with tedious disquisitions, tumid representations, and irrelevant pedantry. Of course an author who is reckless of the inevitable penalty which a short time will bring, may take a temporary advantage of the public, and by embellishing, or by the numerous modes of padding known to book-makers, palm off mere trumpery under the guise of important matter. The greater the demand for narratives of travel, the greater is the temptation to manufacture plausible volumes for quick sale—to steal a march, as it were, on those who thirst after knowledge. And thus the office of the critic has become one of increased responsibility in regard to travellers' books; for he must stand between the much-occupied readers and the authors who compete for their favour, give currency to the meritorious traveller and writer, and set a mark on spurious wares, so that no man may waste his time or his money thereon.

The foregoing reflections occurred to us as we carefully examined the

recent work of a gallant author,* celebrated as an explorer of unknown parts of the vast African continent. Captain Richard F. Burton, already known to fame by his work, 'The Lake Regions of Central Africa,' and by one or two smaller volumes, comes once more before the curtain, presenting us this time with a description of the group of islands which skirt the east coast of Africa, near the equator, and which are known as the Zanzibar Archipelago. The formation of the Suez Canal has reduced the voyage from England to these islands by at least two-thirds of its length. Therefore it may be expected that we who have contrived to be so busy in China and Australia will not be long before we improve our acquaintance with the east shore of Africa and the isles which dot its waters. Clearly, then, he should be welcome who can pleasantly introduce to us these regions. And Captain Burton is welcome so far as he has given us information concerning Zanzibar; but not so welcome as he might have been if he had refrained from wrapping up every sentence that he has written about his subject in ten or twenty sentences relating to all things whatsoever and certain others. The knowledge which he has to impart is no doubt good, when we have found it; but the labour of separating the kernel from the husk is so great, and it would so try even a strong literary digestion to swallow husk and nut together, that our welcome is not altogether such as we could wish to accord to a gallant author coming from the field of research. If, however, Captain Burton has not entirely succeeded as a narrator, it is by no means because he took no pains over his work. On the

contrary, there is evidence of great painstaking, the direction and effects of which we do not set forth in language of our own, being aware that the learned Martinus Scriblerus, in his rules for the attainment of the bathos, has already perfectly described, as we quote below, the kind of endeavour to which we would draw attention:—

"But, above all, preserve a laudable prolixity, presenting the whole and every side at once of the image to view. For choice and distinction are not only a curb to the spirit, and limit the descriptive faculty, but also lessen the book, which is frequently the worst consequence of all to the author."

And again:—

"We may define amplification to be making the most of a thought: it is the spinning-wheel of the bathos, which draws out and spreads it into the finest thread. There are amplifiers who can extend half-a-dozen thin thoughts over a whole folio; but for which, the tale of many a vast romance, and the substance of many a fair volume, might be reduced to the size of a primer."†

So marked, indeed, is the whole book by the kind of excellence to which the learned author of the 'Art of Sinking' points, that a suspicion has come over us that Captain Burton may be frequently an anonymous author, and that his unacknowledged papers may appear under circumstances which procure for them "the largest circulation in the world." It may be only natural that men to whom science is as familiar as household words are to the general should deal unreservedly in the hardest of words and phrases; but if this be so, how great is the obligation of the public to those scientific men who condescend to restrain their nature, and

* Zanzibar: City, Island, and Coast. By Richard F. Burton. 2 vols. Tinsley Brothers. 1872.

† *Vide* Swift's Works.

to write in simple English, of whom Captain Burton is not one! Indeed, it is inconsiderate in men who possess all knowledge not to show a little feeling for their weaker brethren, but to flash upon them without stint such wonderful rays as, instead of enlightening them, may confuse their understandings altogether. Further on, we propose to adduce proof that we do not speak at random of the style of these volumes; and examples of the manner in which that which is relevant has been overlaid with strange agglomerations, which, although it may have fatigued the author to sweep them together, we could well have dispensed with. But we will now give some account of Captain Burton's work.

'Zanzibar,' then, is, like so many of the treasures of literature, a recovered work—one that has been long secreted through untoward accidents, and which the world was in danger of losing altogether; but it came to the surface again as some things naturally do. The report, journal, or other MS. which has now enabled the writer to compile his book, mysteriously disappeared in 1857, and was in 1865 discovered in the strong-box of the Bombay Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. This information is given in the preface, from which it would also appear that to have his MSS. lie for a season what old Mr Weller called "dormouse," is with Captain Burton rather the rule than the exception. His 'Letts,' containing excursions to Sa'adani and to Kilwa, went through a series of transmissions, in the course of which it suffered the indignity of being exposed on a London bookseller's stall, and had the distinction of being left by an English artillery officer in the hall of one of H.M.'s Ministers of State. His meteorological observations, spirited away we

are not told how, were mislaid for years, deep hidden in certain pigeon-holes in Whitehall Place. However, if spirits make off with Captain Burton's papers, other spirits bring them to light again. His 'Zanzibar' MS., it will be observed, had already been eight years written when it turned up in 1865; and some people might have supposed that it was already a little out of date by that time. Its owner, however, seems to have thought that its flavour might be increased by further keeping, and accordingly he gives it six or seven years more to ripen, and publishes his book in 1872. Thus the account given is of the Zanzibar group as it was seventeen years ago; and there are, we believe, inquiring minds of the present day who would be impatient at having a narrative of that antiquity put before them. We hear, from one who has a much later acquaintance with Zanzibar than our author, that the place has changed in a remarkable degree during the last fifteen years.

In 1856, Captain Burton, accompanied by the late Captain (then Lieutenant) Speke, arrived in the Zanzibarian archipelago, preparatory to starting on that now celebrated expedition into East Africa in which Captain Speke had the good fortune to discover the Victoria Nyanza lake. The accounts of the grand expedition were long ago published. The book which we are reviewing contains a record of events and shorter travels which preceded the main expedition. The travellers landed first on the island of Tumbatu, near to Zanzibar, where they remained one night. They then proceeded to Zanzibar island, where they landed at a city of the same name, its capital. On this island they remained for about a month, from the beginning of December 1856 to the beginning of January 1857, the period included in the

first volume. In January was made a trial trip to Mombasah, on the continent of Africa, or, more properly, an island separated by a ford from the continent. This Mombasah is two degrees north of Zanzibar. *En route* to it the travellers touched at Pemba island; and from it they made an excursion inland to the "Mombas Mission-House," at Kisulodi-ni, up the Rabai river. From leaving Zanzibar to leaving Mombasah a period elapsed of about three weeks. Turning south after this, the voyagers passed by Gasi, Wasin, and Tanga to the Panga-ni river, whose mouth is in S. latitude $5^{\circ} 30'$, or thereabouts. Then from Panga-ni town a march inland was made as far as Fuga, a place in the hill-country about thirty miles from the coast; thence there was a march back again to Panga-ni, and a return voyage to Zanzibar, which fills up the time to 6th March. After a halt of two months to recover from remittent fever, the effects of which had not disappeared till 11th May, the party crossed to Sa'adani, on the mainland, just opposite the north-western horn of Zanzibar island, to view "the copal field," as it is called in the book. Copal, it appears, is the staple of this district. It is not extracted directly from the trees, but is dug out of the ground, into which it has for ages been running out of the trees. The time occupied by this visit is not stated, but it can have been at the most but a few days. In June commenced in reality the East African expedition of 1857-59, with which the public has been already made acquainted, and which therefore is not properly a subject of the volumes under review, although it is made use of to introduce in them strictures on the conduct and character of one whom the learned and unlearned of the civilised world were forward to honour,

and whose lips were closed by death before these volumes were published. We shall have something further to say on this head before we conclude. For the present (as it costs a great deal of examination to extract anything precise from the book) we have noted above an itinerary of the briefest kind as a measure of the amount of actual investigation recorded in the work. Thus five months is the extreme period, including stoppages. A work of one-sixth the size would have been ample for record of all that the author observed, and his information, given in that space, would probably have been more useful and more agreeable. The endless quotations, digressions, and speculations, and, above all, the bewildering learning, which swell the volumes, seem to account for a large fraction of the seven years which lapsed between the recovery of the lost MS. and the publication of the book.

A great deal of the verbiage about the Zanzibar region may be reduced to this; that it is exceedingly like the numerous faintly-civilised intertropical seabords of which accounts are in being. Perpetual verdure of trees and rank vegetation, swamps, fevers, tropical shrubs and fruits, hot seasons, rainy seasons, half-savage life, indolence, roguery, troublesome insects,—these and many other familiar things are described with a tedium of which nothing short of an attempt to read the book will give an idea. An ant or a mosquito is a pretty well-known thing: one scarcely desires, when it is mentioned, to be told of all the parts of the earth in which it is found; its name in all the languages under the sun, with philological discussions; its natural history; accounts of people in all ages whom it has crawled over or stung; names of all the learned authors who have mentioned it, with short criticisms

on, and extracts from, their works. And yet, though we are not sure that he has been very prolix about either of the two insects named, we having used them for illustration only, this observation gives a fair idea of Captain Burton's method of treating common things.

But let us see now whether out of all the multiplicity of words we may not find some little that may gratify a reader and afford an excuse for the publication. Zanzibar island and the short excursion into Africa as far as Fuga are the two heads under which we are most likely to find matter worth noting, and we turn to these heads accordingly. First, of Zanzibar. The Imaum of Muscat was Sultan of Zanzibar, where he sometimes resided. Since the time of Captain Burton's visit, the Sultan or the Governor of Zanzibar would appear to be a tributary of the Imaum, and his relative. The island has been subject to the Arab or the Persian since the dawn of history, except for two centuries (sixteenth and seventeenth) during which it was ruled by the Portuguese. The original—or at any rate the earliest known—inhabitants were mulattoes, the descendants, probably, of African negroes and of light-skinned Arabs who had spread over the archipelago in Pagan times. These mulattoes—Wasawahili, as they are called—have since been conquered by modern Arabs, both conquerors and conquered being alike Mohammedans. Many of the Wasawahili are slaves. Of slaves and free, and of both sexes, there would seem to be some 25,000 of them on the island. Besides these, there is a large traffic in, and a large employment of, negro slaves. Altogether, Captain Burton estimates the slave population at two-thirds of the inhabitants. Then there are, of course, the dominant Arabs; and

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there is a sprinkling of Hindus, Parsees, and other Indian races. European and American merchants are settled there; and three countries—namely, France, England, and the United States—are represented by consuls. We have also heard of Mr de Witt, a German consul, and cannot divine why he is not mentioned in Zanzibar. The government appears to be much of that liberal form of which we read in the *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, and which allows of a subject being bastinadoed or put to death on the judgment or at the caprice of the ruler. The despotism of the Sultan is, however, kept in check by the chiefs of clans, who have the character of being very unruly; but we presume that any restriction which they may succeed in imposing on the monarch is simply for their own advantage, and by no means for the benefit of the many. The revenue was derived chiefly from customs duties. The expenses of government are provided and liquidated after a very simple fashion. There is neither estimate nor budget. When the Sultan wants money, he writes an order on the collector of his revenue. Once in three or four years the collector and his sovereign have a settling day, and square their accounts. The standing army of the African possessions of the Imaum numbered about 400 of all arms; and with these wars were made, conquests secured, and insurrections put down. The navy consisted of eight or ten vessels of all degrees of inefficiency. One ship carried as many as fifty guns. Like some other sovereigns, the Imaum sometimes loses his ships from their being sent to sea in an unsound condition. And there is this peculiarity about his navy, that the ships are sometimes disrated, turned into trading vessels for a time, and then

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restored to their dignity as ships of war. As to the trade of Zanzibar, our author quotes from a Report of a Select Committee appointed to inquire into the whole question of the slave-trade on the east coast of Africa, the statement that "Zanzibar is the chief market of the world for ivory and copal; that the trade in hides, oils, seeds, and dyes is on the increase, whilst cotton, sugar, and indigo, to which may be added cocoa, loom in the distance." We should like to know whether the course of the seventeen years which have elapsed since the journal of our traveller was written, has witnessed the fulfilment of the promise of these loomings.

One seeks in vain in the account for the accurate number of inhabitants in Zanzibar. It has been variously stated from 12,000 to 100,000 souls. Captain Burton thought it was 25,000, and a census made in 1849 gave it as 60,000. The island is about 45 miles long from N. to S., and about 18 miles broad from E. to W. Almost on the centre of the western shore stands the city, occupying a peninsula, and crescent-shaped. The portion toward the beach, though bad enough, is the only part which is not from squalor and fetor absolutely abominable. The central quarter is the seat of government. Here the streets are paved with tamped lime, called *chunam*; and here are to be found the European residents and the mercantile classes generally. The houses are very mean, and most of them are flat-roofed for occasional enjoyment of the air. The mosques and public buildings are of the most humble description.

"A bright-tinted carpet; a gorgeous but tasteful Persian rug for the dais; matting on the lower floor, which is of the usual *chunam*; a divan in old-fashioned houses; and, in the best of

the modern style, half-a-dozen stiff chairs of East Indian blackwood or China-work,—compose the upholstery of an Arab 'palazzo.' In the rooms of the few who can or will afford such trifles, ornaments of porcelain or glass-ware, and French or Yankee nick-nacks, fill the niches. Of course, the inner apartments are more showily dressed, but these we may not explore."

About half-way along the crescent stands the fort,—a miserable pile of towers connected by low curtains with a glacis or esplanade in front, and an advanced battery. On the esplanade is the naval and military arsenal, where are some old guns, among which, as our traveller tells us, are "two dozen carronades lying piled to the right of the first entrance, and as much neglected and worm-eaten as though they belonged to our happy colony, Cape Coast Castle." This is not the first time that we have heard of insects having a taste for gun-metal. There was a mess-table story current in Jamaica of the authorities at home having accepted as an excuse for certain guns not being forthcoming in the colony, that they had been eaten by cockroaches; the joke being that the red-tape people, not knowing what cockroaches were (it is an old tale), and unwilling to expose their ignorance, made no comment on the report, but struck the missing ordnance off charge. However, we find in 1872 a man overflowing with learning and science telling us of carronades being worm-eaten! We will suggest that the pieces may have been what is called "honey-combed," or that the gallant captain does not distinguish a carronade from its wooden carriage. We shall show farther on that Captain Burton can be very sharp upon what he conceives to be the blunders of others, or perhaps we should not have been willing to draw attention

to this little curiosity: but to proceed. The quarters of the commandant, the barracks, and the jail are within the walls of this redoubtable fort, which, the story goes, was once cleared of its defenders, and for the moment literally taken, by a single sailor, English or American. Jack could not secure his conquest, but was by stratagem and by force of numbers again dispossessed, and captured.

Below the eastern bastion of the fort is the salt-market, the most frequented place in the city. Here provisions of all kinds are sold, including sharks' flesh, which is much liked by the Wasawahili and slaves. The crowd, as is common at Eastern seaports, are in all kinds and colours of costumes, and compose a picturesque sight. The Arabs of this region, we find, dressed gorgeously in former days, and even now they retain some desire to be handsomely clad. Eastward of the market is the custom-house and bourse, where the display of merchandise is very respectable; and beyond this again is the palace, with an open space all round it. It has a battery and a wharf in front; the building itself resembles a white-washed dingy barrack. Its few windows are jealously raised high from the ground. "Seaward there is a verandah in which levees are held; and behind it are stables and sundry outhouses, an oratory, and a graveyard, where runaway slaves, chained together by the neck, lie in the shade." Opposite, in the centre of the square, is the staff whence flies the monarch's standard: here executions take place, and the *bakur*, or crooked stick, is administered. Beyond this are the residences of the consular body; and now we appear to have done with everything decent in the city. Every step eastward or towards the horns of

the crescent seems to lead deeper and deeper into a weltering region, where the population packed as closely as bees in a hive, absolute want of drainage, heaps of offal, and everything which can make a city impure, warn the visitor to keep his distance. The water, although plentiful, is not wholesome. The sea-front is drained after a fashion, but more by the natural form of the ground than by any sanitary effort of which ruler or people may have been guilty. This drainage, though it relieves the streets, makes the harbour very offensive. The sand between the houses and the water is of course, therefore, very impure. "Corpses float at times upon the heavy water; the shore is a cesspool, and the younger blacks of both sexes disport themselves in an absence of costume which would startle even Margate." A chain of islets far out in the bay, and acting as a breakwater, encloses the anchorage. One of these islands is a burial-ground. The harbour has 9 to 13 fathoms of water, and 13 feet rise of tide. It contains generally a goodly show of shipping (for Zanzibar is really a port of importance), and of course the royal navy rides therein. The monarch seems at one time to have entertained somewhat ambitious ideas about this fleet: he even "once attempted English sailors, who behaved well as long as they did what they pleased, especially in the minor matters of 'baccy and grog; but when the dark-faced skipper began loud speaking and tall threats, they incontinently thrashed him upon his own quarter-deck, and were perforce 'dismissed the service.'"

The slaves, being collected from many different regions, present various specimens of barbarians, sketches of whom are amusing. Some have their teeth filed to resemble the cat

or the crocodile ; some are tattooed (at least we suppose this is what is meant by their having " patterned skins "), and have their lower incisors knocked out. Of the females, many wear white-painted discs of wood nearly as big as dollars in their upper lips. The holes in which these are inserted are first made with a fine point, and gradually enlarged by the insertion of larger and larger plugs, until an opening of fashionable size is obtained. Other females have similar discs of bamboo, ivory, or tin, which cause the upper lips to project some two inches beyond the nose-tips. " In others the cuticle and cutis are branded, worked, and raised in an intricate embroidery over all the muscular trunk." The slave girl shaves her head smooth. There were two mission schools—one English, the other French—in the city ; but we are not led to hope that these would be a source of much benefit to the poor creatures whose descriptions we have abbreviated from the book.

Cocoa-nuts and cloves had been, up to the time of Captain Burton's visit, the chief exports. As many as 12,000,000 nuts had been exported in a year, and one French house could cure 50,000 of them in a day. In 1856 five millions of pounds of cloves were exported ; but our author does not think the cultivation to be of the best kind. The clove, it seems, kills the coffee, which, once a product of the island, had at length ceased to be raised. The pine-apple grows wild ; the orange and water-melon are common. There is a long detail of geological and meteorological phenomena, and animal and vegetable products ; but these are so exactly what one reads of as belonging to most of the coasts of the torrid zone, that the reader might have been allowed to escape with a much briefer account.

We, at any rate, will spare the reader the learned speculations as to who were the forefathers, from earliest ages, of the mongrel personage who figures as the Arab of Zanzibar—also the chronicle of the royal race of that monarchy, and the wonderful philological discussions which grow out of the savage tongues. Although we have had the patience to go through the whole of them, we have found so little that tends to clearness of ideas or to edification, that we find a relief in passing to the second volume and the march into the interior.

Provision having been made for the voyages and journeys, and the important store of presents for the natives having been laid in, there remained one want, namely, that of a guide ; and in supplying this, fortune seems to have been more than kind. Said ben Sálím el Lamki has been so well and (contrary to the custom of the book) so neatly and vividly sketched, that we place the description before our readers.

" He is a half-caste Arab, as is shown by the wiry, woolly hair, which he generally, however, removes with care ; by his dead yellow skin ; by scanty moustaches, and by a beard which no pulling will lengthen. Short, thin, and delicate—a kind of man for the pocket—with weak and prominent eyes, the long protruding beak of a young bird, loose lips, and regular teeth dyed by betel to the crimson of chess-men. he owns to 40 and he shows 45. Of noble family on the father's side—the Benu Lamk of the Hináwi—he was born when his progenitor governed Kilwa, hence his African blood ; and he has himself commanded at the little port Sa'adani. Yet has not dignity invested him with the outer show of authority. He says ' Karrib ! '—draw near—to all, simple and gentle. He cannot beat his naughty bondsmen, though he perpetually quotes Ali the Khalifeh—' Buy not the slave but with staff and sword, Or the lord will slave and the slave will lord.'

I have heard him address, with 'rotund mouth,' his small boy Faraj—a demon of impudence; yet he is mostly ashamed to scold. This results from his extreme timidity and nervousness. He never appears abroad without the longest of daggers, and a two-handed blade fit for Richard of England. He will sleep in an oven rather than open the door when a leopard has been talked of; on board ship he groans like a colicky patient at every 'lop;' and a shipped sea brings from his lips the involuntary squeak of mortal agony. . . . He prays regularly—fasts uncompromisingly; he chews, but will not smoke, tobacco; he never casts away a date-stone; and he 'sips water,' but 'swills milk,' as the Moslem saying directs. . . . The reader will ask what induced me to take a guide apparently so little fit for rough-and-ready work. In the first place, the presence of Said ben Sálím el Lamki el Hináwi was a pledge of our utter 'respectability;' and as a court spy he could report that we were not malignants. Moreover, he was well known upon the coast; and he had a knowledge-box filled with local details, which he imparted without churlishness."

We will add here what occurs a page or two further on in the book. One of the subordinates of the expedition, named Hamid, being supposed to have deserted at the time of embarkation, Said ben Sálím so-laced himself by wishing that the Shaytan might appear to Hamid on his deathbed and say, "O friend of my soul, welcome home!"

"But when the truant came off he was welcomed by the half-caste Arab with a cup of coffee, and a proverb importing that out of woe cometh weal. This considerably diminished the effect of my flea in the ear and threat of the 'bakur.'"

Afterwards Captain Burton lost faith in Said; and he informs us that Captains Speke and Grant, on whom Said afterwards imposed, were also dissatisfied. This, however, we shall take occasion to dispute further on, as Said ben Sálím

appears to have been a "trump" whose character every generous mind would desire to shield from unjust aspersion.

Panga-ni (town or settlement) is surrounded by thick jungle which is full of leopards. One of these brutes, a little before Captain Burton's visit, had scaled the walls of the house in which he was residing, and seized a slave girl. Her burly owner, who was asleep on the terrace, snatched up his sword, hurried into the house, and bolted the door, deaf to the cries of his hapless "property," who was carried into the jungle and incontinently devoured. If there be no humanity towards a nigger, the money value of the slave might, one would think, have prompted a little more spirited behaviour.

The march towards Fuga from Panga-ni, which it will be remembered that Captain Burton and Lieutenant Speke undertook as an experiment, does not appear to have been marked by any striking adventure. The travellers, of course, had to endure many privations, and to run certain risks. Water was often scarce, and, where found, of objectionable quality; and some of their nights were rendered very wearisome by the attacks of insects—a misfortune which may befall a man who is not rash enough to tempt the wilds of Africa. We meet, however, with rather a remarkable character in Sultan Mamba, "the crocodile," a stout, jolly, beardless young black, with the laugh of a boatswain." This genial potentate tried after his ability to obtain certain advantages in the shape of arms and ammunition out of our party, but he only got two caps, a pair of muslins, and a cotton shawl. The paternal character of his government may be inferred from his statement that "his people had but three wants—powder, ball, and brandy; and

that they could supply in return three things—men, women, and children." The country thus traversed is named Usambara; and the sovereign thereof, who seems to have been a greater monarch than Mamba, and perhaps his liege-lord, was named Kimwere. When five days' march from the sea, and within Kimwere's territory, they proceeded through a pass to what the author calls "the threshold of the Æthiopic Olympus." There is here a mountain-range of some importance as separating the coast region from the wild interior of Africa, and of importance also as indicating the form of the surface, and giving some distant hint of how the great waters of Central Africa may collect and flow. This range the party crossed by a pass 4000 feet above the sea. There was no table-land at the top, but all were exhilarated by the fresh mountain air, and charmed by the extensive view. Standing here they were thirty-seven miles direct from the coast, but they had come seventy to seventy-five along the rivers' banks. After proceeding a little farther they saw perched upon the summit of a grassy cone a cluster of bee-hive-shaped huts, which was the city (capital, we presume) Fuga. Much ceremony, however, preceded and attended an interview with the enlightened monarch in whose sway that land rejoiced; and therefore Captain Burton and party, being fatigued by their exertions, and feeling cold in that rarefied air, had to obtain shelter by turning out some sheep and goats. And being thus able to despatch an envoy from a residence, instead of appearing as mere trampers, they lost no time in opening communication with the august sovereign whose guests they considered themselves. Before night three ministers of the crown came with bare heads to report that the

council would meet to discuss the question of their reception, also that his majesty's *mganga* or magician would have to decide upon the propitious hour. The magician, we are informed, is a combination of high-priest, medicine-man, and cloud-compeller. One of the most important duties of this functionary is to regulate the weather; but he also uses incantations, detects and hands over to the secular power those who may have bewitched the sovereign and others, and gives the council the benefit of his second sight. Public prayers for rain in civilised lands, Captain Burton looks upon as the last remnant of the barbarism which exalts a *mganga*.

The wisdom of the sovereign in council and of the *mganga* decided that the strangers should have audience at six o'clock that evening, and the ministers came again in breathless haste to say so; whereupon the reception took place.

The sultan was a very aged man indeed—a centogenarian, his subjects said—emaciated, wrinkled, and shaven. His dress consisted of a Surat cap and a loin-cloth, both much the worse for wear. The royal hut resembled that of a simple cultivator, and was filled with the aroma of the ruler and his attendant high dignitaries. It had been decided that the strangers were European medicine-men, and they were ordered forthwith to compound a draught which should restore the ancient chief that evening to health and strength. On their representing that they had not brought with them the necessary drugs, he said they might seek them on the hills.

This old potentate is a governor of some influence. He has 400 musketeers, whom he calls *Waengrezi*, or Englishmen, and 300 wives, each of whom lives in state. He

has nearly as many sons as King Priam. His person is sacred: "even a runaway slave saves his life by touching the hem of his garment." His government is strong, though he does not proceed upon the greatest happiness principle, but sells his subjects of all ranks, ages, and sexes, either singly or by families. He seems to have been quite friendly.

Here Captain Burton, having reached the turning-point of this journey, and perceiving, perhaps, that it is rather barren of incident, takes occasion to make his protest against the very many functions which travellers are expected to perform nowadays in order to satisfy the public. In this we agree with him, so far as regards travellers who desire to gain a reputation without achieving anything of note. The least that men of this cast can do is to furnish quantities of details as the only set-off against commonplace work. But when there has been real, honest, energetic enterprise, we don't remember that the public have been so *exigeant*. We believe that the work of Speke and Grant gave entire satisfaction, notwithstanding that it was announced without all those prodigies of learning and science which glorify Captain Burton's adventures, and without which, as he tells us, the adventures would hardly have been graciously received.

The journey back contains little

worth abridging. While waiting for the vessel that was to take the party back to Zanzibar, the travellers* spent a week in destroying hippopotamus—a butchery which we have no pleasure in contemplating. As we have more to say, and are likely to overstep our space, we will now endeavour to make the reader acquainted with Captain Burton's style. When, at the beginning of his second volume, he scoffs at the Geographical Society's term, "tentative expedition," for what he, in simpler phrase, calls "trial trip," a person who has read nothing of what precedes or what follows may imagine that the author is a man of very plain speech. This would be a mistake; for it would seem to be a rule of the gallant Captain never to employ an unpretentious or easily-understood word or phrase when he can find a hard one. Fractious children with pale faces are in his phraseology "*etiolated enfants terribles*:" by the by, it would be as well if our author would find out what an *enfant terrible* means; it does not mean an unruly child. When he happens to rise at daybreak, he is "on deck with Aurora." It is fortunate that both Aurora and Captain Burton enjoy characters beyond suspicion, and that Tithonus is not a very energetic personage, otherwise this announcement about being on deck with a Captain of Bashi-Bazuks might provoke inquiry.† Water is

* i.e., Speke and others of the party. We question whether our author was more than a spectator.

† It appears to us that our gallant author has here overlooked a great opportunity. If we might presume humbly to imitate his unapproachable style we would suggest something like what follows as an appreciable addition to the text of 'Zanzibar':—

Aurora, probably the same as 'Hés, distinguished by the Greeks as *ροδοδάκτυλος* (Hom. Il., *ρῶψ* Γ κ. τ. λ.), or *rosy-fingered*. It is remarkable that the Somali, though of course repudiating the divine nature of the dawn, have nevertheless their *bosshi* for rosy (evidently identical with the *δαῦρος* of the Periplus)—not *bosshée*, as Mr Booley would have us believe, which, according to my experience is the Congoese form. I have, moreover, remarked that the term *rosy* has been applied to the dawn in Brazil, in Fernando Po, and indeed in some parts of our own island; about Durham especi-

written of as "the sweet element." Zanzibar is said to be "gorgeous in its vestment when others would be hybernating in semi-nudity." Boughs are "fronds." A scene is "prospected," not viewed. In the description of Zanzibar harbour we read that "Here the Hormos Epistatos (statio fluctuosa, or open roadstead of the Periplus, chap. viii.) has been converted into a basin by the industry of the lithophyte." And we will ask the intelligent reader what he can make of this from page 72, vol. i.: "The machua or 'little boats' of the Lusiads, which De Barros calls 'Sambucos,' are still the same, except that a disproportioned sail of Merkani (American domestics) based upon a pair of outriggers, now supplies the primitive propeller." Or this, page 74: "The stern is long and projecting, as if amphibœnic. The swan throat of the arched prow is the cheniscus of the classical galley-stem." "Motley is the name of the crowd," is the expression which informs us that the costumes were various. And here is a gem: "This instititious race" (the Wasawahili) "might be called Hamito-Semitic if anywhere we could discern that the mythical Ham, or his progeny, ever became negroes." The branches of a river are said to "anastomose." It would be easy to multiply instances; the whole book is defaced by bad taste of this kind. There is also a great deal of useless scribbling about matters on which the world is pretty well agreed, as for example:—

"Drainage and cleanliness are

panaceas for the evils of malaria where tropical suns shine. Drainage of swamps and lagoons can improve S'a Leone, and can take away the stink from South African barracks. Zanzibar city, I contend, owes much of its fatality to want of drainage, and it might readily be drained into comparative healthiness."—Vol. i. p. 102. This is not very original. And here is another old acquaintance: "Where public servants are not paid, they must, of course, pay themselves; and they often prefer the latter mode, as they pay themselves far better than they would otherwise be paid. About a century ago we did the same thing in India, where men amassed fortunes; and until the late reforms, such was notoriously the case throughout the Russian empire. Perhaps in the present day the best place to study the system of all peculation and no pay is Damascus."—Vol. ii. p. 166.

We know not how to account for the remark at p. 183, vol. i., where it is stated that Equatorial Africa is certain death to English women; and that husbands who desire to be widowers have only to send their "better halves" to Zanzibar or Fernando Po, which is a simpler method of attaining their object than poisoning or violence. Our information, derived from an officer who was lately H.B.M. Consul at Zanzibar, and who must have had far more experience of the island than Captain Burton, is of quite a contrary complexion as regards Zanzibar. Many English ladies have lived and

ally, where the epithet has been in use since the days of the Venerable Bede (*Eccles. Hist.*); and in the least known parts of Cornwall (Lysons. *Borlase et al.*), as I myself ascertained when spending from six to nine months in the house of Sir Hengstone Pendingle, of infamous memory. Years after, this epithet of *rosy* occurred to me—but, ah! with what a feeling of sadness!—when once sitting up till daybreak, at the foot of the Andes, with my friend the Richborne Claimant. We consumed together a bottle of brandy, of which I got only one glass—about the proportion which always falls to poor me, whether of fame, of pudding, or brandy! *Point de zèle!* I say again.

are still living there, and our informant does not know of one who died there.

Again, at p. 197, vol. i., a monkey is spoken of as delicious to eat. The late consul can recollect no such thing as a wild monkey on the island. Food is so cheap and plentiful there for those who would dare to eat monkey—i.e., the poorer classes—that it would never suit them to go to the expense of importing monkeys to eat; and as for Mussulmans, they would not touch them as food.

The East African Expedition having been made the subject of another and previous publication, one scarcely sees why a chapter of the present work should be devoted to an examination of "How the Nile question stood in the year of grace 1866;" nor why controversial writings about the Nile basin should be mixed up with this account, which, according to its title, has to do with a quite distinct and clearly-defined subject. This admixture of two different subjects is the more to be regretted, as it has given occasion for the expression of sundry disparaging observations, relating often to persons of some mark, who appear to have been unfortunate enough to incur the author's ill opinion. The late Dr Buist, the editor of the 'Bombay Times,' had orders—so Captain Burton says—to write down the "Somali Expedition;" and the chaplain at Aden, Brigadier Coghlan, and Captain Playfair, are also mentioned as having contributed to thwart our author's views. The Governor-General, Lord Dalhousie, is spoken of as "of pernicious memory." The Christian merchants of Zanzibar are believed by Captain Burton (vol. i. p. 56) to have caused, "more or less directly," the murder of M. Maizan, an Ensigne de Vaisseau.

The English Consul at Zanzibar, newly appointed, is compared unfavourably with his predecessor, as being reported "to be not indifferent to self-interest." There are grave imputations against this officer in connection with the lost MS., and a "peculiar animus" ascribed to the home branch of the Indian Government. It is stated (vol. ii. p. 390) that on board H.M.S. *Furious* "he [Captain Speke] was exposed to the worst influences, and he was persuaded to act in a manner which his own moral sense must have afterwards strongly condemned, if indeed it ever pardoned it." Now the *Furious* was, at the time of which Captain Burton writes, commanded by Captain Sherard Osborn, and she carried Lord Elgin and Staff, and Mr Laurence Oliphant. What, then, can these worst influences have been? Even Said ben Sâlim, of whom our author once thought so highly, comes in for a share of detraction, and is said to have got employment under Captain Speke by "telling a gross falsehood;" to have played "his usual slavish tricks" in the second East African Expedition; and to have been dropped, "utterly useless," at Kazeh with the Arabs. Now it is remarkable that in Speke's 'Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile' not a word is said of Said having told a falsehood. He was left behind, it is true, with all his suite—he being a person of importance, and travelling with his followers—but that was because he had fallen hopelessly sick, and could not keep up with the expedition. Poor Speke's testimony on this head cannot now be further obtained, but Lieutenant-Colonel Grant is fortunately still "to the fore." Some pains were lately taken to ascertain Grant's opinion of Said; and Grant said, as we have the best

reason to believe, that he considered him to have been "a perfect little gentleman." Whence, then, can Captain Burton, who was not with the second East African Expedition, have obtained the information which so defamed Said ben Sâlim?

It is not a little distressing to read the names and the number of them on which we find remarks of more or less disparaging character to have been made in these volumes. The upshot of it is, that almost everybody with whom Captain Burton has been officially connected seems sooner or later to have inspired him with a feeling of ill-will.* Now we can quite understand how a man passing through a career as arduous as Captain Burton's has been may have had many an altercation, and may possibly have had ground somewhere for lasting enmity; but we confess we are quite unable to understand why the mere accident of an official having been, nearly or remotely, connected with Captain Burton, should have so surely drawn upon him Captain Burton's censure. All these persons, from the Governor-General of India downwards, cannot possibly have been in a conspiracy to thwart or injure Captain Burton. We would ask the gallant officer to reflect that his readers may possibly draw the inference that a person who becomes so invariably dissatisfied with others may by others be thought not to give great satisfaction himself. He honestly tells of several "wiggings" which he from time to time received; and we are ourselves aware that these numerous reflections of his have set some people inquiring. For instance, his remarks on General Rigby, the Consul at Zanzibar,

have been the means of bringing to our notice a statement that General Rigby had felt it his duty to report officially to Bombay on some questionable remarks and proceedings of Captain Burton; and that the Secretary to Government, in his reply, spoke of Captain Burton's statement in no very flattering terms, while he entirely exculpated General Rigby. Captain Burton will know whether this rumour is correct or not; we, of course, know only what we have been told. But what we desire to impress upon the gallant officer is, that these very general imputations tend but little to inspire readers with the sentiments of the writer of them, while they are apt to create a suspicion that the latter may be an impracticable person. And we would therefore, if he should again come before the public as an author, wish much to see Captain Burton's next work quite free from what we cannot but consider as glaring blemishes.

But we have still a far from pleasant duty to perform to the memory of a distinguished person, who, though Captain Burton's old comrade, and though removed from the strifes and jealousies of this world, is now in 1872 spoken of slightly in 'Zanzibar,' while his abilities, achievements, and motives, are cruelly depreciated. What the Royal Geographical Society thought of Captain Speke is evident from what they did. They awarded him their gold medal, and they made him, and not Captain Burton, the chief of the second East African Expedition. The British public has also its own opinion of the services of Captain Speke, and will not easily be induced to abate in the least its

* Even his Bashi-Bazuk service left a sore place, and drew some sarcasms, though we have not thought it necessary to quote them.

admiration. His fame, therefore, may be looked upon as pretty well secured. Nevertheless, there are friends of Captain Speke who hold his memory so dear that they may not bear to hear a breath of disparagement uttered over his untimely grave. These have been roused to indignation by what we cannot help calling the injudicious remarks concerning Captain Speke in Captain Burton's book, and they will not allow a word that has been written to his prejudice to remain uncontradicted.

At page 297 of vol. ii. we find the following passage:—

"Manwa Sera then threatened to attack Kazeh, and the Arabs begged Captain Speke not to abandon hosts whose warm and generous hospitality he repeatedly acknowledges. The reply was that 'he had a duty to perform as well as themselves, and that in a day or two he would be off.' Some men would not have treated so lightly a heavy debt of gratitude, but such compunctions are often fatal to success. Captain Speke, I doubt not, really believed that 'the interests of Old England were at stake.' He had not hesitated for a moment in throwing over a Himalayan friend who was to have accompanied him, nor did he deem himself otherwise but justified in separating from a companion subject to African fever recurring every fortnight."

These accusations,—first, of declining to assist friendly Arabs who had a claim upon his gratitude—second, of "throwing over" one brother officer and deserting another,—are very grave. Captain Burton, who makes the accusation, was not with Speke, and consequently can say nothing of his own knowledge on these points: Colonel Grant *was* with Speke, and can testify. He has been referred to, and says that Speke was urged to take a side in

a native war, but declined to do so; that he was asked to give arms and ammunition for prosecution of this war, and declined to do so;—the consequence of which refusals was, that the Arabs determined to murder both Speke and Grant; and it was only through Speke's cool and courageous behaviour in this matter that the expedition was able to proceed. The consequence of taking a part in this miserable war would have been that the expedition then in progress would have been summarily terminated, and that another English expedition would have been impossible for years to come. Speke, therefore, would not only have directly disobeyed his instructions if he had made the least move towards becoming a partisan in this war, but he would have made a gross and useless blunder. Speke did use his best influence to produce an honourable peace, displaying in his negotiations a tact and delicacy such as few possess. The inveterate hatred of the combatants was, however, too great to give a peace-maker a chance of success.

It cannot be exactly divined who is the officer alluded to as having been "thrown over." Colonel E. Smyth may possibly be the person intended. If so, the answer is, that he was prevented by illness from accompanying the expedition. Whether Smyth be intended or not, Grant is persuaded that Speke was quite incapable of treacherous or ungenerous conduct to any one. The comrade suffering from fever, whom Speke left behind, was Grant himself, who not only does not feel aggrieved, but who asserts that Speke would have acted most improperly in doing otherwise than he did. Grant was left in safe hands; he afterwards rejoined Speke,* and

* Speke's practice was to suppress in his Journal everything that could look sensa-

the two together terminated their expedition with perfect success. The public has thus our author's statement on the one side, and Colonel Grant's on the other, and must judge between the two.

At p. 309, vol. ii., it is imputed to Speke that he allowed an error of 1000 feet in the level of the Lake Tanganyika to remain uncorrected. Now any man who knew Captain Speke must know well that, as he went a second time to Africa, he would certainly have taken steps on the second occasion to clear up any and every doubt as to the results of the first. But it is certain that he had no suspicion, neither had the Royal Geographical Society any suspicion, of an error, or they would undoubtedly have desired him to verify his former altitude (which they did not), and he, whether instructed or not, would not have rested until all doubt had been removed. It is not certain now that there was an error; but the question raised by Captain Burton is not as to the correctness of the altitude, but as to Speke's sincerity.

Various reflections are made in these volumes against Speke for not having inspected the shores of the Victoria Nyanza more frequently than he did. Censure of this kind coming from a person who never saw the lake at all seems to be uncalled for. It was surely a point for consideration of the traveller both in the first and second expedition, how far it was necessary, and how far it was practicable, to make

an inspection of the margin. The route along the western shore is, it appears, so intersected by streams and swamps that it is impossible to skirt it closely. The route followed was strictly in accordance with information carefully and plentifully collected from the natives, and in accordance with Speke's own observations, who seems to have had a remarkable power of judging of the character of a country from knowledge of a few features. All travellers reported that a circuit round the western shore to Uganda was imperative. Both Speke and Grant saw the broad, boundless expanse of water at different points,* and no uncertain expression in the writings of either leads to the supposition that they were not accurate in their estimate of the extent of the Victoria Nyanza along the western shore which they traversed. The eastern shore they laid down in their map entirely from information. We think, then, that we may dismiss this objection without further argument, more especially as it comes from a person who might have participated in the great discovery of the Victoria Nyanza if he had thought proper. Captain Burton's instructions directed him to make his way to the lake, and authorised him to return home by descending the Nile. He did not go himself to the Nyanza but remained at Kazeh, and allowed Speke to penetrate thither by himself. One fails, therefore, to see by what right, or with what propriety, the author of

tional, and to confine himself to dry facts. This severity of style, which to us does not appear judicious, seemed to Speke so essential, that it caused him, when he wrote, to put much restraint upon his nature, which certainly was not cold nor apathetic. When *speaking* of Grant rejoining him after their separation, he used the warmest language and expressed the greatest delight.

* That is to say, from all points whose height enabled them to see over the papyrus and tall vegetation which enclose the lake. The atmosphere was, for the most part, clear, and the travellers cannot have been mistaken as to the fact of there being an immense lake there.

'Zanzibar' now in 1872 criticises Speke's method of conducting his exploration.

In p. 317, 318 of vol. ii., Speke is sneered at for having made his lake "a physical impossibility," inasmuch as he has given it three main effluents and some minor ones. We confess that we do not perceive the impossibility: the fact may, or may not, be as represented, but at any rate we are safe in following the account of persons who have seen the lake and its effluents rather than that of a person who never saw it at all. Three main effluents Speke never ascribed to the Nyanza. *The* main effluent is the White Nile, 300 yards broad: the other streams, if effluents at all,—and Speke does not positively state that these minor streams or ditches are effluents, only that he was told that they came from the lake,—are very unimportant. Colonel Grant says that they were crossed by wading, or at the most by swimming.

Speke is said by Captain Burton to have "lost his head" during an attack made upon the expedition at Berberah, which expedition was under Captain Burton's direction. Speke, it is known, was on this occasion speared in eight or ten different parts of the body, and was made a prisoner. We have heard an account of the affair, which allows Speke to have lost his head only in the sense that he lost his leader, who was not to be found at the critical time; and the fact that the Bombay Government refused to reimburse the expedition (as we learn from Captain Burton's book that it did), seems to favour this latter reading. *Appropos* of this, we have good reason to believe that it was from the Governor-General of India in Council, not from the Bombay Government, that the refusal came: also

that the determination to refuse was come to after Captain Burton's conduct, whilst employed on an expedition in the Somali country, had been taken into consideration.

The numerous complaints, more or less directly made, of Speke having supplanted Burton and deprived him of credit justly due to him, are, we think, sufficiently answered by a reminder that the Royal Geographical Society considered and decided on the claims of both. And we do not follow line by line insinuations as to Speke's weaknesses of character, because testimony on the other side which is overwhelming makes him out to have been a daring, bold horseman, and a pedestrian and cragsman whom few excelled. He was "first spear" in Indian hog-hunting; and on his energy and ability as a traveller it is not necessary for us to dwell.

Captain Burton has a theory of his own about the Nyanza Lake, which he thinks to be a lake district, or many lakes. Of course he has a right to his opinion; but we do not expect that many will follow him in opposition to the evidence of men who have seen. Speke's observations are all published—there is no attempt at concealment—and, as every one knows, the observations of the first pioneers of science are liable to error. Such errors must, however, be corrected by farther examination, not by criticisms of the closet. We could wish that our author's unkind remarks had been omitted, as well as the tone of superiority by which it is made to appear as if Speke was simply a pupil acting under direction of the superior mind of Burton. Again, the looseness of Speke's geography is animadverted on; and at p. 396, vol. ii., there is the following remark: "Else how account for his 'partial eclipse of the moon

happens on the 5th and 6th of January 1863' (Journal, p. 243)." Now, on referring to Speke's Journal, we, to our surprise, find no such expression as is here placed between inverted commas. Speke makes but one entry in his Journal for 5th and 6th January; and, in the course of this entry, mentions the eclipse without saying on which of the two days it occurred. This attempt to convict Speke of ignorance on such grounds is very sharp practice indeed.

Worst of all are the observations relative to Speke's untimely death. The impression which a person ignorant of Speke's character might receive from them is, that Speke dared not meet Burton, and that, consequently, his death may not have been wholly accidental. None of Speke's friends will for a moment admit the correctness of this suspicion, which we unhesitatingly reject. Speke, according to reliable accounts, held Burton altogether too cheap to have made his acts of the least account. He may have had no great pleasure in Captain Burton's society, and he probably had but too good reason to shun it; but as to fearing to meet him, the idea is preposterous!

Having done now with this disagreeable task of commenting upon things which, to our mind, disfigure this book, let us say before we conclude that in our opinion Captain

Burton has the ability to write well, and that what he most requires is firmness in resisting the suggestions of a questionable taste. When writing naturally, he is graphic and pleasing. We gave above his clever sketch of Said ben Sâlim, and we will conclude with a description of the giant calabash-tree:—

"The tree is at once majestic and grotesque; the tall conical column of spongy and porous wood, covered with a soft, glossy rind, which supplies half Africa with bast, will have a girth of forty to fifty feet, far exceeding the cedars of Lebanon, whilst the general aspect is that of a giant asparagus. Like the arbutus, some trees will be bare, others in leaf, and others in flower, all at the same season. When thickly clothed with foliage, growing almost stalkless from the wood; topped with snowy blossoms, like the fairest and lightest of water-lilies, and hung about with four or five hundred gourds—ovals somewhat larger than a coconut, dressed in green velvet with the nap on, and attached by a long thin cord, like tassels which wave with every breath of the zephyr—its appearance is striking as it is novel. Nothing, in fact, after the negro, can be more typically and distinctly African."

Writing like this is, to our thinking, preferable to the showiest and most varnished composition. We shall be glad to find that Captain Burton has adopted the same opinion if ever he takes pen in hand again.

A TRUE REFORMER.—PART IV.

CHAPTER XIII.—IN WHICH NO PROGRESS IS MADE.

BUT although our visit to Leatherby was passed thus agreeably, and it was a real happiness to witness Eva's delight at being with her aunt and sister again, and still more to notice the gain in strength due to our quiet life, I was consumed myself all the time by an inward restlessness in utter contrast to the peaceful surroundings of the scene. As for news, Miss Barton took in the *Stampton* weekly paper as well as the *Leatherby Express*, a very large sheet made up of a great many extracts in very small type; not a very clever paper Miss Barton said she was told, but which she thought it proper to subscribe to as an encouragement to local enterprise, although no one in the house appeared to read either of them; and I took the liberty of supplementing the supply with the London dailies, and watched eagerly the progress of the session. At times it appeared as if I should be altogether too late in my errand—evidently destined to be a fool's errand, so comprehensive was the Government scheme, so sensibly would the Ministers express themselves about the great question. And when the *Dial* threw out suggestive feelers to the effect that enough had been done already in the way of reform and organisation, while the *Daily Eclectic* pronounced the same opinion quite decidedly, my expectations fell to zero. I had evidently risked my wife's life for nothing. But then perhaps the next day, on the first breath of opposition, a Minister would signify that this point or that would not be insisted on, and that the whole plan was an open question subject to any degree of modification;

that in short the Government scheme meant everything or nothing, according to the amount of squeezing applied; or another Minister would make some fatuous remark showing that he had not mastered the first elements of his case, and did not in the least understand what he was talking about; or Mr Merrifield would take occasion to throw out some disparaging hint signifying that he disliked and disbelieved in the whole business, and that the Secretary of State for War should not set the country on fire for want of cold water thrown upon it by his chief: coming across such extracts as these, and turning to the *Unicorn*, which did not fail to denounce Mr Merrifield and the whole Cabinet every day as ignorant impostors, only fit to meddle and muddle; reading these inspiring opinions, and the savage attacks made almost every evening in the *Piccadilly*, I could discern a glimmer of hope that this part of the business of the country was not likely after all to be settled out of hand.

But in the mean time no advance was being made towards building my Spanish castle, even so much as laying in the needful bricks and mortar. Here was nearly a fortnight gone, and absolutely nothing done, and the feeling that time was thus slipping away grew daily more irritating and perplexing, to say nothing of the absurdity of coming all this way in such a hurry merely to dawdle at the end. It was therefore with a sense of relief that I heard one morning from Mr Roberts that my presence in town was needed for a decision regarding the sale of some South American stock, and

other matters of the sort, which afforded an excuse for bringing our visit to an end.

Sybil was allowed to return with us to town, her aunt having got over the objection felt at first to intrusting her to the care of a military man. The fact was Miss Barton's idea of the profession appeared to have been mainly derived from a certain Captain Brawn, a half-pay officer, and the only representative of it residing in Leatherby, a burly-looking ruffian, who seldom appeared in public except on Sundays, when he scowled down on the other residents during morning service from a pew in the gallery; who was reputed to beat his wife, and certainly beat his two sons, those unfortunate lads frequently turning up at the grammar school with black eyes and other bruises not earned in conflict with their playfellows. The eminent respectability of my long face, which not even the dissipation of an afternoon cigar could abate, had effectually overcome the natural misgivings of the gentle lady about intrusting her precious charge to our care; and we left accordingly for town one fine morning with Sybil, our party being further supplemented by a little maid, niece to Hannah and Maria, who had served an apprenticeship in waiting and needlework in Squire Bamfylde's family. It was a mournful day in the little house, for the numerous partings Miss Barton had gone through with her nieces did not make them more easy to bear, and Mary Drew, who had never been without a companion since she entered it, was especially disconsolate.

Our party being now too large to admit of our fulfilling the engagement to stay with Mr Paterson, we returned at first to the hotel; but that gentleman declaring that there was abundant room for all, and making a very strong point of the

matter, we moved into Sackville Street almost immediately. And indeed this caravanserai was not a suitable place for us; the care of these young girls involved perpetual attendance upon them, and the most careful escort could not secure them from the ill-manners of insolent starers in the lobbies, while Annette seemed frightened out of her wits by the noise and publicity and the free-and-easy ways of the servants' hall. So as Mr Paterson would take no denial, I gladly accepted his hospitality.

Our host lived in Sackville Street because he said he liked the quietude and fresh air of that part of the town after the bustle of the city. At any rate there could hardly have been a more convenient locality for young people paying a first visit to town, and who now addressed themselves seriously to the business of sight-seeing; flower-shows, concerts, morning and evening; the Crystal Palace of course; the Royal Academy; the exhibition of the old masters, which both Eva and Sybil pronounced stupid. Some days, instead of sight-seeing, we would sallied forth for a ride in the Row, on very presentable hacks hired for the occasion, and I don't know which of us enjoyed it more, the girls or their escort, for in truth I felt on all these occasions that after all there was no prettier exhibition in London. We seldom saw our host before dinner-time, at least the young ladies did not, for they were never down in time for his early breakfast, and of course they did not accompany me in my occasional visits citywards, where the business of scheduling went slowly on, Mr Paterson appearing not the least in a hurry to adjust the estate; and in the evening we were seldom alone, for a continuous stream of guests joined the dinner-party—Scotch clients, English clients, sometimes even Irish clients, who had come to town on busi-

ness, filling day after day the little dining-room in Sackville Street, till between the steamy odours of viands in the warm summer evening and the crowd of white-waistcoated officials there seemed often to be hardly breathing-room. Very long were the repasts, but not a bit too long for our host, who sat at the head of the table, smiling pleasantly, and happily unconscious that it was possible to feel bored on such occasions. His pleasure in life indeed appeared to be to accumulate clients for himself, or at any rate work for Herries and Crouch to do, and to pay back the former in hospitality when they came to town. The after-dinner times were somewhat trying too, especially if any ladies were among the party, there being no specific hostess to act as stage manager: happily the long dinner made the rest of the evening short, and the awkwardness was often relieved by the young lady from the Royal Academy, who sang with a voice fit to bring the walls down, and caused quite a little crowd to assemble in the street below the open window. On nights when there were no visitors we used to go to the opera, or sometimes, as Mr Paterson was always pleased to act as escort, I deserted them for the House of Commons, for which special orders were always obtainable through his kindness, and sat steadily through the debates, interesting or otherwise, watching the forms of procedure and trying to discover why the bores were so patiently listened to. Mr Paterson got orders also for the girls to the ladies' gallery one evening, and it promised to be an interesting occasion, as both Mr Braham and Mr Merrifield were expected to speak; but we had not been there long when I perceived from the opposite gallery their signal for retreat, and rejoined them in the lobby.

"Such a dreadful place to be
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boxed up in!" said Eva, next morning at breakfast.

"And then only think to have to listen to those dismal creatures down below," added Sybil, who had begun to find a voice sometimes even when I was present.

"Yes," said Eva; "only fancy choosing to go there night after night when they might be going to the opera or to dances. How anybody who is not obliged can lead such a life——"

Here the speaker stopped and blushed, for I had confided to her my desire to become a member of that august assembly; but I laughed away the fears she expressed afterwards when we were alone lest she should have wounded my feelings; she must have found out by this time, I said, that her old husband belonged to the stupid people whose tastes lay in the direction of dismal pursuits.

Then there was a Woolwich ball to which we all went, for by this time various regimental friends had begun to find us out. Brooke and Winchester, who were stationed there, insisted on our going down to dress and stay over the night, and turned out of their quarters, which they fitted up quite sumptuously for the reception of the young ladies with cheval glasses and toilet-tables which the foolish young fellows had evidently hired for the occasion from town regardless of expense. The girls were delighted with their apartments, and with the sergeant's wife who was engaged to wait upon them, and our hosts appeared equally pleased with their company. The ball was pronounced perfect, and as Sybil had never been to one of any kind before, she was properly impressed with the splendour of the occasion; while even Eva, who had gone through two seasons of continuous dancing, had never seen anything like it. "The Sirmoori balls were very nice," she said; "but all the

officers used to wear black coats—so stupid of them. Only fancy, Captain Gray, I have only seen Charlie twice in his uniform; he might almost just as well not be in the army at all. Even when there were full-dress balls he used always to stay away. He hates balls and things of that sort, and would rather be reading some stupid book any day, —wouldn't you, Charlie? He looks awfully bored now, doesn't he?" These remarks, which may possibly have been suggested by my lanky face in a fit of absence assuming an unusually lugubrious expression, were uttered while we were assembled in Captain Gray's quarters preparatory to a descent of the whole party to the mess-room; but indeed one must have been a very misanthrope not to appreciate the scene and the value of our contribution to it. Of course the girls enjoyed it, especially when at about one o'clock it became possible to dance, and it was sufficient pleasure to witness their happiness, and the admiration they excited: it was broad daylight before we returned to our rooms.

The ball was followed by a break

fast-party in barracks, to which various officers' wives were invited, after which it was proposed to go over the Arsenal, one of our hosts holding an appointment in that establishment. Eva declared she would like to see the Arsenal of all things, but in fact she could hardly stand for fatigue, and was fain obliged to accept the offer of a drive in a pony-carriage with one of the ladies to see the Academy and Shooters Hill, while Sybil and one or two unconquerable spirits joined the party of sight-seers. We should all have been glad of pony-carriages before the day was over, for our guide was one of those excellent fellows who suppose you must be as interested in their business as they are themselves, and would not allow us to pass by anything; the result was that Sybil was soon reduced to the same state of prostration as her sister, and the two returned to town in the evening half-dead with fatigue, and scarcely able to exchange compliments with our kind young hosts, who insisted on coming down to the railway station to see us off.

CHAPTER XIV.—I MAKE A CONFESSION.

Next day was perforce spent by the sisters resting in Sackville Street, from sheer inability of either to do anything else, and as London was now getting very hot and stuffy, we were all glad that the following day was that appointed for our visit to Mrs Herries; the fresh air and quiet of Bushey Heath formed a grateful change, and there was some chance of Eva getting the rest there which it seemed impossible to insist on while in town.

Mrs Herries, in the absence of any family distractions, occupied herself with the cares of lap-dogs, ducks of strange plumage, and geraniums. Mr Herries devoted such time as he

could snatch from business engagements, and travelling up and down by the Liverpool night mail, which seemed to be his principal employment, to the encouragement of the fine arts as developed in the English school of water-colour painters; and the walls of all the rooms in the comfortable old-fashioned brick house were covered with various specimens of their skill, remarkable for their originality and diversity of treatment. Teddington Lock, by Jerky Coster, a composition consisting of willows, weeds, and water, with a foreground of three ducks and a little girl in a pinafore with blue spots. "Coster's best manner,"

said Herries, as he took me round the rooms; "I'll back Coster to paint a duck and green weeds against any man in England." Shepperton Lock, by the same artist, a composition also made up of willows, weeds, and water, with a foreground of four ducks and a little girl in a pinafore with pink spots. The Lago Maggiore from the south, by Joe Botham; a very snowy mountain, a very blue sky, a still bluer lake, with a red road in the right foreground set off by a green vine trailing over a pillar, and a brown peasant woman with a white head-dress picked out in body-colour. Lago Maggiore from the east, by the same artist; another blue sky, white mountain, and blue lake, with a red road in the left foreground, also set off by a green vine trailing over a pillar and a brown peasant woman with a white head-dress in body-colour. "Wonderful clean colourist Joe Botham is," said Herries, as we surveyed these works of art together; "and they say he has never been to Italy, which makes his painting all the more extraordinary." Then there was a "View of Harborough from the sea," by George Sparrow, junior; a brig going over the bar, with a background of very yellow sand, and a cliff with very distinct stratification standing out against a lake and indigo sky. "View of Riley from the sea," by the same artist; the same brig going over the same bar, also with a background of very yellow sand and cliff; remarkable similarity between the geology of Riley and that of Harborough. "He's a very clean colourist too, is young Sparrow," said my host; "in fact, I really don't know which is the cleaner of the two;" and certainly the appearance of the yellow sands quite bore out this criticism.

But my mind just now was too much engrossed with another subject to admit of its being properly susceptible to the elevating influence of

these works of art. As the days went on, bringing me no nearer to the accomplishment of the object my heart was set on, I felt as if possessed with a demon of restless dissatisfaction, till it became utterly impossible to take real interest in anything that was going on around me. Few people will be able to enter into this feeling, because few probably have experienced it in the same intensity; but the lover who sees the precious moments given him in the society of his mistress passing away, and his cause from pique or obstinacy or blundering making no progress; or a mother who, when she would devote to the dear child about to leave her the last hours before parting, finds them absorbed in the paltry distractions of everyday life; or the professional man growing grey while he eats his heart away with vexation for want of the opportunity which never comes;—those who have undergone experiences of this kind may appreciate my feelings. Withal I could not but be amused at the incongruity of my outward appearance and inward desires; apparently bent only on amusement, and that under the most agreeable auspices—escort to two of the prettiest girls in London, fresh and unsophisticated enough to enjoy these simple pleasures with unalloyed delight, yet all the while consumed by this restless desire to be up and at work. Still more absurd was the contrast between the greatness of my ambition and the selfish recklessness with which I set off to pursue it, and the perfect impotence of the sequel. Here was a man who aspired to a great mission, whose thoughts, sleeping and waking, were absorbed in his intended task, and yet who had not the moral courage and common-sense sufficient to set about accomplishing the first simple step; no one in fact could have been more impressed than I was myself with the absurdity of my position; the

ridiculous contrast between the magnitude of my aspirations and the impotence of my behaviour. The fact is, I did not know how to set about making a beginning. To do this involved taking some one into confidence, and I shrank from the ridicule such a confession of my aspirations might evoke. Yet without the aid of some friend there seemed no way of making a start. I had heard or read, indeed, of Parliamentary agents, personages who arranged the representation of the country by some mysterious procedure, working in league with the political organisation known as "the clubs;" men who registered, ticketed off in their memory, the representative feeling of every constituency in the kingdom, and kept lists in their note-books of the approved candidates to be distributed among them, and the charges to be incurred by each; men without whose aid and support it would be useless to come forward for any borough, large or small. But although I had heard there were such people, and to a certain extent believed in their existence, I did not expect to find the names of any of these gentlemen in the London Directory, and I felt too shy to make inquiries about them. The natural course would have been to consult my kind-hearted and shrewd old lawyer; but whether it was that his clients were all exceptionally stupid people, or that he supposed a military man by reason of his profession must necessarily be incompetent to understand business matters, Mr Paterson had a way of going down to first principles whenever he touched upon such things by no means flattering to one's self-esteem—as, for example, a brief disquisition on the nature of consols, and a statement of the fact that a thousand pounds invested in the three per cents would produce more than three per cent; also that

when you made a payment it was a good plan to take a receipt; and further, that the Court of Probate was an institution established by law whose requirements must not be evaded, and so forth. I had a sort of feeling, therefore, that if I made known my wish to Mr Paterson he would be disposed to regard it as more of a fancy than a serious purpose—a suspicion, moreover, that he would probably carry on any electioneering business in the same leisurely way that he set about scheduling the estate, which would be fatal to my hopes of a speedy consummation; and thus I had somehow always stopped short when on the point of speaking about the matter. But I confess that when returning from my numerous visits to his office in Gracechurch Street I had more than once taken a route homewards by Chancery Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields, and other localities affected by lawyers, wondering which of the names painted on the doors belonged to the powerful being whose agency was necessary to open the magic portals.

However, there must evidently be a limit to this ridiculous state of bashfulness, and I determined to unbosom myself to Herries. Herries I fancied would be more sympathetic in such a matter, at any rate would enter readily into my ideas, while it was easy to see that he would be more prompt to act if action were needed. His restless dark eyes betokened a man of action, and indeed half his time seemed to go in rushing about the country on mysterious errands. Herries evidently was the man to apply to. And an opportunity occurred immediately on our going down to Bushey. Our dinner-party the first evening comprised in addition to ourselves only Mr Crouch and the young lady from the Royal Academy. Crouch was much younger than

either of his partners, a man good-looking enough, but with a mean manner, and who called Mr Paterson 'Sir,' and never addressed Herries without the prefix of 'Mr,' and seemed not at all at his ease in the presence of ladies. In fact he came up much more closely to what, in my ignorance of such matters, I supposed to be the conventional standard of attorneys, but then my acquaintance with the legal profession had been so far very limited. In India, happily, we had not much need for lawyers, and the only ones I knew anything of personally were a benevolent Chief-Justice of the Supreme Court at Calcutta, whose unbounded hospitality included all the young and friendless, as I had often experienced when a youngster doing duty at Dumdum; the other was a half-caste fellow said to be a barrister, but who never appeared in the presidency courts, and who picked up a precarious livelihood as a pleader in the up-country courts in any disreputable cases where Europeans were concerned, and the agency of such a creature, who spoke Hindustani better than English, was useful. It had been my ill fortune to meet this worthy every evening for about a month at the hotel *table d'hôte* of a station whither I had been detached on court-martial duty, and where he was pleading in some case in the local court; and as we sometimes had the table to ourselves, we had thus got to be on speaking terms. But it was rash to generalise from specimens taken at the zenith and nadir of the profession. Certainly I never quite understood how Messrs Paterson and Herries came to associate with them in their firm a man so different to themselves as this young Crouch; perhaps it was to do the dirty work of the firm, if there was any to be done; at any rate he seemed of

much less account in it than old Mr Roberts the head clerk, and his partners kept him at a great distance, addressing him familiarly by his surname, while he never spoke to them without the prefix of respect.

However, on the present eventful occasion Mr Crouch knew his place, was not only respectful to his partner, but appeared fascinated by the society of the young lady from the Royal Academy, and on the ladies leaving the dining-room through the open window into the lawn, that gentleman accompanied them; and as soon as Herries and I had resumed our seats, I at once fell to work.

"Mr Herries, can you put me in the way of setting about getting into Parliament?"

"Getting into Parliament? Are you thinking of taking up that line?"

"That's what I came home for. Of course there was the primary object of this affair of the property, but that was what made me in such a hurry about it."

"Well, I should say you couldn't do better. There's plenty of room for military men in Parliament. It will give you an occupation too, for I suppose you have had enough of soldiering by this time, and now that you are married you would like to be settled."

"No, I can't say that I am tired of the army, and my wife likes the notion of military life; but you know there is no need to leave it because one goes into Parliament."

"True, I had forgotten that. Oh no; your position would be the better both ways. A plain captain, saving your presence, may be a nobody, but a captain and M.P. is a very different sort of person. Well, I have no doubt it can be managed. You must be prepared to spend something of course."

"Anything in reason, or out of

reason either, if that is the only difficulty. But now, can you advise me how to set to work?"

"Well, I should say the best plan would be to fix on some place, a small borough would be best; large places are apt to be dreadfully expensive unless you go in upon some extreme platform, and you ought to be at least a duke or an earl's son to carry off ultra-Radical principles properly. I know one or two snug little towns where there are no strong existing interests. You should fix on one of these, go down there, buy or rent a place in the neighbourhood, subscribe to all the local charities, give good dinners and make yourself popular—you may leave the popularity part to Mrs West—and then when the next general election——"

"Next general election? why, that is ever so far off! I want to get in at once."

"Ah! that's quite another matter. That's just what everybody wants to do who failed last time. It's a very difficult matter to get a seat nowadays. Why, I suppose there are a couple of hundred men at least looking out for seats at the present moment."

"Is that really so? Certainly I have heard the same thing said before. Everybody talks about there being these two hundred expectants, but there are no manifest signs of their existence. I daresay there may be a couple of hundred men who would like to drop into seats if they came in their way without any trouble, but if there are this number of eager applicants, why don't they appear? There was that election for the Cockaleekie Burghs only the other day, since I came home, but two hundred candidates did not come forward; there were only two."

"Ah! that was a Scotch seat, which choked off a lot of men to begin with. But of course I don't

mean to say that everybody has an equal chance for every place. Want of local interest eliminates a lot of men. Then, again, a great many places are closed to those who are not on a particular side in politics. But local interest is the thing. It's a curious state of things altogether is this matter of getting into Parliament. You see men who would give their heads and ten thousand pounds into the bargain for a seat and can't get one, and on the other hand you may see boroughs literally going a-begging."

"That is just the impression I had obtained merely from watching the course of elections in the papers. And one of these begging boroughs is just what I should like to find. But in most cases the chance of success, as far as I can make out, appears to depend on standing for a place where there are not stronger local interests already established—in fact, where the field is clear."

"You are quite right, I believe. Maryborough now is a case in point. That is the little place down in North-westernshire which I hail from,—at least I was brought up there as a boy, and my friends are living there still. Well, we could have brought you in or anybody else that we wanted at the last election. The big man of the place, Lord Awbury, who used to have the seat in his gift practically, has fallen out with the townspeople and lost all his influence, and the seat was literally going a-begging."

"Well, but why did not one of the two hundred expectants go down to such a land of Canaan as this with the ten thousand pounds in his pocket? This is just one of those chances which one would have thought everybody would have been on the watch to snap up."

"No, I believe a stranger would not have had a chance. If one had come down on our side, Lord Aw-

bury would have started a candidate on the other, and people would have been divided, for a local big-wig, quarrelsome or not, always has a certain amount of interest, and very possibly we should have lost the election. No, we needed some one sufficiently well known or well recommended to prevent a split. They wanted my brother, who is the leading solicitor in the place, to stand, but he declined to become an M.P. on any terms, and so at last they hit upon the local banker; he made a great fuss about it, but they insisted on his coming forward, and brought him in after a merely nominal contest. But he was not at all ambitious of the honour, and if you had been on the spot then, I daresay we could have managed the thing for you, and for a mere trifle."

"Excuse my asking the question, but with all this interest at your command, why did you not stand for the borough yourself?"

"Who? me? Oh no, that would not have suited me at all. I am much too busy for that sort of work: besides, it would not be in my line at all. I don't think you will find many of my fraternity in Parliament; we leave the talking work to be done by the talking branch of the profession, the barristers. But I daresay there will be a capital opening for you there next time, for our banker will hardly care to stand again; he is quite an elderly man."

"Well, but now, is there not such a thing as making vacancies? Cannot men be got to retire sometimes in favour of others by a sort of private arrangement? Your friend the banker, for instance; if his membership involves such a sacrifice on his part, might he not be persuaded?"

"Well, as to that, people are apt to say a good deal more than they mean about such matters; and now that he is there, I am not at all sure

that he does not enjoy the dignity of the thing as much as other people. No, I doubt if old Butler would care to retire, at any rate till the next general election, and of course anything in the shape of consideration would be quite out of the question in that quarter."

"Well, but setting aside Mr Butler and Maryborough, still I suppose there *are* men and places where considerations, as you call them, might not be without force?"

"I daresay there may be. I am not a Parliamentary agent, you understand, and don't know much about these things; but I can soon make inquiries for you if you wish, and find out. But in such a case your chance of success, I suspect, would be a very risky one. All that a man can do for you by retiring is to secure a vacancy and an open field, and perhaps to give you the first start. You may find all your trouble and expense in that line come to nothing after all."

I remained silent. There could be no doubt of the soundness of his views; and, brought into contact with common-sense, my schemes for immediate action seemed to melt away at once into a more visionary form than ever.

"But I take it, Captain West," continued Herries, after a pause, "that a year or two would not make any serious difference in your case? If you want to go into Parliament merely for the name of the thing, there would surely be no great harm in waiting a bit? But if you mean to lay yourself out for being a working member, why, you could not do better than begin by taking up some business in the city; go on to one or two directions, and so forth. This will stand you in capital stead when you go down to canvass any place. With your command of capital we could arrange this for you off the reel. Solid concerns I mean, of course—

a first-class assurance company or joint-stock bank—not those shady things a man loses caste in the city by having anything to do with.”

“Thank you very much; but waiting in this way is just what I am so anxious to avoid. The fact is, Mr Herries,” I added, after some hesitation, “I have set my heart upon accomplishing this matter before this army reform game is played out. I can’t at all express to you how anxious I feel about it, absurd as you may think it; but I assure you the calmness of my outward appearance is no index of the anxiety I feel at having lost even these few weeks in setting about this job. Is there really no way of carrying out my idea at once?”

Mr Herries got up thoughtfully, and stood with his back to the fireplace, giving his spectacles a little push further on to his nose before replying.

“Well,” said he at last, “but after all—of course I don’t pretend to know much about army matters, they are not in my line—but, from all I can hear, if you got into Parliament four or five years hence you would be in capital time for anything that is likely to be done beforehand, beyond what has been done already, and that, some of the papers seem to say, is all that is needed to be done. I should think that if this is your object there is no need for particular hurry.”

“That may be very true, but it would be a very poor consolation to me all the while if my hopes had to be deferred so long. The fact is, —I daresay you will be amused at my confession, but I may as well make a clean breast of it at once, and then perhaps you will understand my eagerness in the matter. The truth is, I believe that what has been done, although well enough so far as it goes, nevertheless leaves a

very great deal more still to be done; and I have a sort of idea, foolish perhaps, but not the less a strongly-felt one, that I could bring some useful contributions to the discussion. You see, it seems to me that the people who are most eager about army reform are just those who don’t know anything about it; and those who have the knowledge can’t or won’t make use of it. Now I think I may venture to say that I have got to the bottom of the military mystery, so far as there really is anything mysterious about the thing, while I am certainly one of those who believe that there is room for further improvement. And what I am so anxious for is to get an opportunity——”

My little oration was here interrupted by the arrival of the coffee, and Mr Herries sat down and thoughtfully stirred his cup. At last he said—

“But it is not necessary for a man to get into Parliament in order to have his say about the army, or anything else. Why not ventilate your ideas in print?”

“Nobody seems to read books nowadays; at least nobody does who is living about town, and one doesn’t want to convert the people who live down in the country.”

“Well, if they don’t read books they certainly don’t read speeches. But it is not necessary to bring out a big book in order to have your say. There are plenty of editors ready to get hold of ideas and put them into shape for you. In that way you may get as much publicity as you like.”

“But do you think that is really a good way of attracting attention? It seems to me that things said in a newspaper are practically lost, buried in the mass of matter poured forth.”

“People certainly read the papers if they read nothing else.”

"Yes, but it goes out of their heads as fast as it goes in. People seem to me to read for the news, or to kill time, or from habit, not to learn. Besides, the papers are so one-sided, most of them, that people don't believe in them. Either the Government are a set of hopelessly incompetent blunderers, or they represent all the honesty and ability of the country as collected on that side. Any proposals coming forward with a trade-mark of that sort stamped on them are sure to be received with more or less suspicion; besides, everybody does not read the same paper."

"Oh! if you want to be sure of having the whole country for audience, then I admit even a daily paper might fail you. But I suggested writing instead of speaking because you seemed to be in such a hurry. Even when you get into Parliament that is merely one step. It takes a man perhaps a dozen years to get what they call the ear of the House."

"Is that necessarily so? Look at Rigby Sebright and Summer-toppe; they appear to have gone off at score almost from the first day they entered it."

"As for that, Rigby Sebright is literally made of brass. He is a man who would always make himself heard wherever he was. It would take a good deal to put *him* down. And he is an uncommonly long-headed fellow to boot. Then you must remember that both of these men are barristers, men who have been accustomed to talk on their legs for years."

"Well, then, take Pendragon; he went into Parliament almost straight from college, yet he seems to talk pretty freely."

"Yes, very true, but then very possibly he may have practised beforehand at debating clubs; besides, he went in with a university repu-

tation. Of course I don't deny that there are such cases, but then there must be natural gifts for the thing. And very possibly you may yourself have had the needful practice beforehand to make you feel sure of your powers. You will excuse my plain speaking, I am sure, but you want my advice, and so I feel bound to say what I think."

"That is precisely what I desire, and I daresay you will think me still more presumptuous when I tell you that I have never addressed half-a-dozen people together in my life. Nevertheless, absurd as it may sound to say it, I feel certain that I could do so without any difficulty if I had anything to say, and the opportunity for saying it. Besides, though here again it may appear very absurd to offer an opinion when my sole experience is derived from three or four visits to the gallery of the House, if one thing impressed me more than another about the place, it is the patience with which men are listened to who have got anything to say, without any reference to their manner of saying it. It is, for the matter of that, almost the same with men who have nothing to say. Their tolerance of bores is surprising."

"To tell you the truth, I have not been present at a debate for years. I could not manage the time even if I wanted to, but judging from what I see of members out of the House—and I have had to do with a good many one way and another—I can quite understand that they may be dreadfully stupid there as elsewhere. But, after all, speaking in Parliament won't do anything any more than writing. Independent members are perfectly powerless to introduce changes in such a matter as you speak of. If you want to be reforming the army, you must get a place in the Government. And that is not an easy

matter, whatever public speaking may be."

"I see you are laughing at me, and you will laugh still more when I tell you that this is part of my scheme too. A very humble place will do; I ought to mention that although a simple regimental officer now, I have had some experience of public business, although in what you would perhaps consider a small way, still sufficient for giving an insight into the ways of Government; and my belief is that all you want is the power of initiation. Provided you have that, and get other people to take up your ideas, and are behind the scenes to help to pull the administrative wires, it does not matter much, I suspect, who is nominally the leader. Of course you must have the opportunity of expounding your ideas, and that a seat in the House would give. And please don't run away with the notion that I believe myself endowed with any special gifts or special knowledge. There are dozens of men in the army I daresay who would do the thing just as well, probably very much better, only they haven't the chance. I should never have done more than think about the thing in more or less dreamy fashion—for men don't trouble themselves about the impossible—but for the stroke of fortune which has befallen me. As things have turned out, however, I feel the impulse very strong upon me, and anyhow I must make the attempt."

"Well," said Herries, after a pause, "my devil's advocacy of the difficulties before you has at least made it plain that you are very anxious to get into Parliament, and the point is now how to forward your wishes. There are men who make it their business to manage this sort of thing, and it can be easily arranged to put you in communication with them. At the same time, I

am rather afraid you will find their hands full already—that is, that they have already pledged themselves to other applicants to help to any seats likely to fall in. The competition for these things is tremendous, I have always understood. And after all I have no great belief in these gentry. I see that Government officials often cannot find a seat when they want one, which looks as if there were a good deal of humbug about this special agency business. Still we must see what can be done. But, mean time, you ought certainly to have a second string to your bow; you ought to establish a local interest of the kind I mentioned just now, in view to the next general election. I should say it would not be at all a bad plan to try Maryborough. It's a nice country enough, and the hunting is pretty fair, I believe, which I suppose would be an attraction. I daresay you would have no difficulty in finding a suitable place for rent in the neighbourhood. If you don't fancy Maryborough, some other little borough might be tried. There is Leatherby, for instance; why, bless my soul!" said Herries, jumping up, and taking his old position before the fireplace, "how is it I never thought of this before? Why, Leatherby would be the very place of all others. Sheepshanks has the borough in his pocket, and he and Paterson are on most intimate terms, and there must be a vacancy there before long. Yes, it was odd I never thought of this sooner; Leatherby is the very place of all others to go in for. Besides, you are known there already, or at any rate Mrs West is. Her relations live there, don't they? So you will have some local interest to start with."

I thought of Miss Barton's circle of friends, old Miss Barbour, Mrs Crane, and the Misses Provest, and

observed that I feared in an electioneering point of view my wife's acquaintance would hardly be able to help much.

"Never mind," replied Herries, "you won't need any other help if Sheepshanks will support you. He returns the second member just as easily as he does himself. The great point is, that very likely you may not have to wait for a general election. Lord Stowe may go off any day; he is a very old man, and very shaky, as I happen to know; and then Lord Wraymouth's seat becomes vacant."

"But is it not likely Mr Sheepshanks may be already committed to local interests of some sort? The contingency of this seat becoming available must be foreseen by others as well as by us. I should be afraid we shall find ourselves forestalled here. There are almost sure to be men on the spot who want to get in."

"I don't know about that. Lord Wraymouth has had the seat almost unopposed there for five-and-twenty years, till people must have almost forgotten to think about the possibility of a change of members. Besides, Sheepshanks is an eccentric man in some ways, and I am told keeps very much aloof from the people about him, and certainly he would not encourage any negotiations about the matter while Lord Wraymouth is there. Nor can you yourself do anything for the present; but depend upon it Leatherby is just the place to look out for. Paterson knows all about it much better than I do. I am not well acquainted with Sheepshanks myself, but Paterson and he are very old friends. I'll speak to Paterson about it to-morrow."

At this juncture Mrs Herries looked in to say that there were lights in the drawing-room, and

that the young lady from the Royal Academy was going to sing. To the drawing-room accordingly we repaired.

"I'll talk over the matter with Paterson to-morrow," said Herries, as we left the room. "I did mean to go down to Manchester by the twelve o'clock train, but it will do just as well to start in the evening, and I will see Paterson first."

I expressed my thanks hurriedly as we passed into the drawing-room for the hearty interest he took in the matter, but begged him not to let Paterson know why I was in such a hurry about it. "For goodness' sake don't tell him all I have told you. One confession is enough. I don't want both my friends to think me a donkey."

We found Mr Crouch standing by the piano, with a pleased simper on his face, turning over the music-leaves for the young lady from the Royal Academy. It was in keeping with my little wife's unaffected simplicity of character, and her sister's, that after the first-named accomplished vocalist had sung three or four songs, sending her powerful voice well out of the room through the open windows into the garden, and so round to the shrubbery in the front, till even the cabman who was waiting to convey Mr Crouch to the train might share in the general entertainment—that after this quite thrilling exhibition Eva and Sybil should not refuse to take her place at the instrument, and to sing one of their simple duets; for I have observed that many young ladies who sing reserve themselves for occasions when invidious comparisons are not likely to be made; to say nothing of the perfect good taste with which they received the young lady's somewhat overdone expressions of delight at the treat they had afforded her.

CHAPTER XV.—REPORTS PROGRESS.

"So," said Mr Paterson, when, the second day after that described in the foregoing chapter, I went down to the office in Gracechurch Street to discuss the interminable schedule—"so you want to go into Parliament. I wish I had known this before you went down to Leatherby. I would have made a point of introducing you to my friend Sheepshanks, for Herries's idea of trying to get you in there seems a very good one. I am afraid there is no chance of his coming to town again this session, and I can't very well go down there without some business to take me, for this is a sort of thing that must be managed carefully. Anyhow, there is no hurry in the matter; very possibly it may not come to anything for some years. The great thing is to be on the look-out, and we are in a position to have the first information if the seat is likely to be vacant. Meanwhile, what Herries suggests about your establishing yourself down there seems a very good one, supposing you fancy the neighbourhood."

The idea certainly did seem a very good one, especially as it would keep the sisters together, for Sybil's visit to us could not be indefinitely prolonged. But in my restless state of mind I felt quite unable to face the prospect of settling down to that sort of country life. Something more than partridge-shooting was needed for inducing a habit of patience. There was a still stronger reason against the plan. The physician whom by Mr Fergusson's advice I had called in to see Eva pronounced that her system wanted tone, and recommended change of air and a course of Kissingen waters, so we determined to pay that place a visit. Parliament was

up, and Mr Paterson wanted to be off on his annual visit to his sister in Scotland; Herries was about to start for America on business; and the progress of scheduling the estate was practically suspended. Not that there really appeared to be anything remaining to be done. All the more risky investments had been withdrawn, and the bulk of the property was now concentrated in a few good securities—in fact there was nothing remaining towards the completion of the executor's business that might not, so far as I could see, be despatched in a few hours. But Mr Paterson was not a man to be hurried. Happily we are not responsible for our thoughts, but it makes me blush even now when I call to mind how it struck me at the time that the estate was now in a handy form for a man who wanted to realise it, and that it would be a very convenient opportunity for doing so when both Herries and myself were away, and Mr Roberts the managing clerk also bound on a fortnight's holiday. Happily, too, my worthy friend did not know the base suspicions with which I involuntarily repaid his disinterested kindness.

However, there being no longer a reason for staying in town, which was already empty and very hot and stuffy, we started off with a due supply of circular notes and an undue supply of luggage, Sybil, Eva, the little maid, and myself, all full of pleased expectancy, and Annette trembling with wonder and anxiety at this her second great move in life. We took the Rhine route, which I believe we enjoyed quite as much as the ordinary run of travellers; but inasmuch as the girls knew no German, and almost less French, and my acquaintance

with those languages was merely a book one, we did not add much to the general stock of observation which our countrymen have already brought to bear on those regions.

At Kissingen we led the usual pottering, purposeless life affected by idle people at the smaller German baths, and as Eva had to get up early to drink the water, the days were not too short. A more uninteresting life so far as incidents go it would be difficult to conceive, yet I look back on that time of peace as one of the happiest in my life. The day began with a very early saunter in *deshabille* on the promenade, while Eva consumed about forty tumblers of water to the strains of the band. Then back to the hotel to make a more complete toilet and breakfast. Then a morning passed in quiet idling on the part of the girls, and German lessons on mine. They joined in these at first, and we took in a German newspaper and used to spell through the advertisements in turn, but the business was voted stupid at length, and I was left to take my lessons alone. The music was more successful. They had lessons both in the piano and singing, and it was hard to say which of the two improved fastest, while for people who had never been accustomed to settle down to anything, it was surprising how much they practised. In the afternoon we sallied forth again to the promenade, where every one, as before, spent the time in fatiguing himself by slow pacing up and down to the music of the band. Then there was dinner, and then another stroll.

New acquaintances of course were made during our sojourn, nor were old acquaintances wanting. Young Brodie of the Indian Public Works to wit, who lived out on the canals near Sirdhāna, and used to drive in occasionally to partake of station

hospitality attired in a blanket-jumper by way of coat, a mushroom pith hat about three feet in diameter, and white trousers which might have been made for a much smaller brother. I confess I did not recognise Brodie at first when he accosted me, attired in one of Foole's frock-coats of faultless make, a geranium in his button-hole, and altogether from his glossy black hat down to his natty boots looking more adapted to the meridian of Bond Street than the free-and-easy appearance affected at a German bath; while his whilom shaggy beard was trimmed to a Vandyke point, and nothing remained of his former jungly aspect but the incipient baldness due to exposure under an Indian sun. "Jamie looks a respectable being now," said Miss Brodie, who with her mother was being escorted by the newly-returned brother through a German tour, "but you never saw such a figure as he was when he first came home. I hope all the gentlemen in India don't dress like that, for he wants me to go back with him when his furlough is over, and I am sure I couldn't stay there if people are such frights." I assured her that although last week's fashions were not strictly followed there, still that the men of the canals must not be taken as samples, for that they were looked on as an exceptional race of wild beings. But the great advantage of India, I observed, was that in that climate people never grew old, a view of things which, still more than my assurances about the civilisation of the country, appeared to reconcile that young lady to the prospect of exile. Her brother was a young fellow of a little over thirty, and Mrs Brodie had informed me incidentally that he was her youngest child.

Then there was Featherstone of the Civil Service, like Mr Barton a commissioner, generally regarded by the fellow-residents of his station as

the cheeriest of old bachelors, and famous for his ladies' dinner-parties, but who now turned up with a fashionable wife and two showy daughters. "It was so hard to leave the children," Mrs Featherstone said, as we lounged up and down the promenade, "when their education had to be looked after; and really my health used to be so delicate in India; and then my husband had bought our house at Brighton, and there was a difficulty about finding a tenant; and we wanted a home for the boys in the holidays; and so it seemed better in every way that he should leave me at home. But these new furlough regulations are a great blessing; it is such a comfort to have Mr Featherstone home again after being out only three years; indeed I don't think I could have made this journey alone with the girls." But there is no lot in life without its trials, and Mrs Featherstone appeared to be already somewhat depressed by the fact that in two years her husband would complete his full term of service and be obliged to retire, "and how we are to manage then I am sure I don't know, with three boys at school to provide for. Mr Featherstone's own expenditure has always been very heavy, quite equal indeed to what his pension will be, and with our double establishment we have never been able to save anything." Mean time, until this stroke of ill-fortune should descend they were making the best of their time; and for people who saw each other only about every five or six years they seemed a truly attached couple.

But our principal friends at Kissingen were the Lowders. Mrs Lowder was an invalid, on whose account the visit had been made; the two girls were nice-looking, clever, and a little blue, although straight-way on becoming acquainted they

fell down and worshipped my two companions; but to me secretly the great attraction was the father, for Sergeant Lowder was member for Drymouth, a cheery, pleasant fellow, full of conversation, and never tired of talking Parliamentary shop, as I was certainly never tired of listening. And when I observed the impression which the House had evidently made upon him; how this prosperous, well-known advocate appeared to be scarcely on speaking terms with the chiefs of his own party, and admitted to me in confidence as we sat smoking under a lime-tree in the gardens, that he never rose to speak without trepidation, and how, after being five years in the House, he still felt himself, to use his own expression, "a mere junior;"—when such was the experience of this light of the criminal bar, who had spent his life on his legs, and was reputed to be able to turn any witness inside out; with such a precedent before me, my heart sank within me as I thought of the absurdity of the hopes I had allowed myself to nourish, that I, an untried stranger, should succeed in soaring to higher flights where such a man had failed.

Such reflections were wholesome, no doubt; but at this distance from England, and when the noise of Parliamentary business had died away in the recess, the foolish restlessness which possessed me there had to a great extent passed away. Nor had I heard anything from the firm to keep up any excitement of feeling. Mr Paterson was still, I supposed, in Scotland; Mr Herries had gone to New York; my last letter was one from Mr Roberts the manager, sending a further supply of circular notes; and I was becoming quite settled down to the quiet monotonous life we were leading, which brought my wife improved health daily—the mornings with a

German master, the afternoons in reading some book aloud, when the girls did fancy-work and professed to listen, the evenings of music in the Lowders' or our apartments. Six weeks had passed away in this fashion, and four tumblers of the cold water were becoming almost too cold in the fresh morning air, when the course of our quiet life was interrupted by the arrival of a telegram, which we found awaiting us on our return one evening from a picnic with the Lowders and Featherstones in the neighbouring mountain woods.

It ran as follows:—

"From R. Roberts, Gracechurch Street, London, to Captain West, Hotel de Russie, Kissingen. Mr Paterson thinks a favourable opportunity may soon occur for carry-

ing out your wish. He recommends your speedy return."

It was quite needless to enjoin speed. Annette and Sybil sat up half the night packing, for the latter would not allow Eva to exert herself, and we started from Kissingen the next morning, and travelled homewards as fast as we could without undue fatigue to the latter. She was delighted with the news when I explained its purport, knowing my anxiety on the subject, but happily did not ask for particulars as to how I expected to carry out my plan, so I was not obliged to confess my ignorance, and my utter dependence in the matter on the friendly firm. For Sybil it was sufficient to know that we were recalled by business.

CHAPTER XVI.—THREE CONSPIRATORS VISIT LEATHERBY.

I telegraphed from Brussels that we should arrive in town the same evening, and Dobbins the office messenger was waiting to meet us at the Charing Cross station. Mr Paterson, he reported, was down in Lincolnshire, but would be back the next day, and begged that we would go to Sackville Street as before, where everything was ready for us. Mr Herries had returned from America the day before, but had gone down again to Liverpool that morning.

To Sackville Street accordingly we went, and found that Mrs Benton, the good lady who combined the functions of cook and housekeeper, had prepared dinner for us, and Frederic, Mr Paterson's man, was waiting to receive us, and we were soon settled down as comfortably as if we had never been absent. But the air of Sackville Street seemed dirty and thick after Kissingen, and a sort of reaction followed the excitement of the journey. Nor had

Mr Paterson left a single line in elucidation of his first message; and as the ladies retired almost immediately after dinner, I wandered out to walk down my restlessness, taking, as was natural, the route of the great building at Westminster, now dark and silent.

Next day, about noon, came a telegram from Mr Paterson from the city. He had gone there straight on his return, would I go down to meet him? Of course I drove down to Gracechurch Street at once, whither he had arrived by a morning train, and in a few minutes the reason for our sudden recall was explained. The opportunity we had talked about, it seemed, was likely to occur at once. Lord Stowe was very ill, and gradually sinking, and would not outlive the week. "I have just come from his lordship's place," Mr Paterson went on to say. "We are not his lawyers, although we have been employed by him and Lord Wraymouth at different times.

His regular lawyer is a solicitor at Lincoln; but the latter asked my advice about certain testamentary arrangements his lordship desired to make, and so I went down. And this, you see, is how I have become acquainted with the facts. If we had been the family lawyers, I should have considered myself bound in confidence to say nothing about the matter, indeed not to act without first taking note of Lord Wraymouth's wishes. And of course all I am saying now is in confidence. But the fact is, the seat at Leatherby will be vacant before the end of the week, and Lord Wraymouth is away yachting in Greece with his daughters (fortunately Lady Wraymouth is at home and with the earl), so that there is really no opportunity of acting with him, or consulting him in the matter. The succession to his seat will be settled before he can get home. If you are to take advantage of this opportunity, it will be necessary to act at once. Now the question is, what is the best thing to be done?"

Thereon we fell to discussing the matter. Mr Paterson's idea of the proper line of action was, that he should write to Mr Sheepshanks, informing him of the probable vacancy in the representation of the borough, and asking for his support on my behalf; and although this seemed hardly a vigorous way of setting to work, or a fitting sequence to our rapid flight from Kissingen, still I did not like to press my kind friend to do more than he felt inclined to undertake himself, more especially in a matter turning on the death of a man who was still alive; and accordingly I was writing a letter to Mr Sheepshanks at Mr Paterson's dictation, and in his name—he never wrote a letter with his own hand if he could help it, but generally called in a clerk to act as amanuensis—when Mr Herries

and his travelling bags arrived from Liverpool, and he came straightway into Mr Paterson's room, and after greetings the nature of our occupation was explained to him.

Herries was for more vigorous action at once. Everything depended on taking steps quickly. There would be a dozen men after the seat as soon as the news got abroad, as it would have done already if Lord Wraymouth had been at home; the Treasury whip would be writing to Mr Sheepshanks to ask his support for some candidate, and a promise would be given, and we should be too late.

"I don't see myself," said Herries, "any difference between acting before a man's actually dead, and acting before he is buried, and that you will have to do in any case if you really mean business. Writing will never do here. Suppose Mr Sheepshanks were to ask for further information, or to propose conditions, then there will be a reply, and further writing and delay, and so the chance will be lost. Besides, the matter of this vacancy may have got wind already; who knows but what a letter may go down from the Treasury whip by the same post? He may have telegraphed already, very likely, and Mr Sheepshanks is a stanch man by the Government. No, no; everything will turn on an hour or two, depend on it. The best plan is to go down at once and see him yourself. I think Captain West should go too, and be ready to give any explanations needed, or guarantees for the genuine liberalness of his principles."

Mr Herries was so strong on this point that his partner soon agreed to the plan, and proposed starting the following morning, as it was now two o'clock, and there was no reasonable train available; but the former insisted on the value of time, and urged that we should go down

by the night mail. I felt that this was the right thing to do, if we went at all, but did not like to say anything, for my elderly friend was evidently tired from his morning's journey; but his younger partner, whose normal state it was to spend the night in a railway carriage, thereby, as he said, saving the day for business, made light of the half-expressed objections, and so it was arranged accordingly; and Herries, after leaving the room, put in his head again to say that he would go too, and was out of the house before Mr Paterson could stop him.

I returned to Sackville Street to order, on Mr Paterson's behalf, an early dinner, leaving him to follow after he had transacted some business. Eva was delighted when I told her that there was a possibility of my becoming member for Leatherby in place of Lord Wraymouth, although she could not understand why that nobleman should be obliged to retire from the representation; but still more at the prospect opened of going down shortly to see her aunt. It was agreed, however, that Sybil should be told for the present only that I was called down to Leatherby on business, but business quite unconnected with the little house in Church Street.

After dinner, Mr Paterson and I set off for Paddington to catch the night mail. This was the first time Eva and I had been separated, and the back drawing-room was witness to a tender parting while Mr Paterson followed Frederic and the luggage down to the hall; nor could my gentle wife restrain a tear or two, although I should not be absent for more than a couple of days at most, while receiving the ten-pound note which I made over to her in case money should be needed, the first she ever had possession of, I think, for hitherto I had been paymaster on all occasions.

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It appeared at first that Herries would not be of the party, but he came rushing out of the ticket-room on to the platform at the last moment, followed by Dobbins the messenger carrying his travelling-bags and rug (that useful creature, by the way, seemed to spend a considerable part of his life on railway platforms), to whom, standing at the carriage-door, he conveyed a string of messages and instructions up to the last instant.

Knowing how emphatically his time was money, and what a quantity of travelling he had on his own account, I felt quite uneasy that Herries should be coming down too, and I took the opportunity of his partner having settled down to a nap to apologise for giving him so much trouble.

"Don't mention it," said Herries. "When I take up a thing, I like to go through with it. Besides, if we manage this job well, it will save a lot of trouble by-and-by, for of course you won't be satisfied till you get what you want; and between ourselves," he added, dropping his voice, "although I don't know a man in London with a sounder judgment than Paterson, still, you see, he is not so young as he was, and he may not be quite so alive as I am to the value of time in affairs of this kind, where a few hours or minutes may be decisive one way or the other. So altogether my coming may be of use."

With this Mr Herries tucked his railway rug round him, and adjusting his spectacles firmly on his nose, prepared for sleep. I tried to follow his example, but in vain; the excitement of the prospect before us was too great. There is no time when the brain conjures up images of the past and visions of the future more busily than during a sleepless railway journey. The motion of the train imparts a sort of exaltation

to the brain, though its activity may be exerted in a purposeless, inconsecutive fashion. Thus as we rattled along, scene after scene of my life came up; my landing in India and the enjoyment of all the novelty that awaits first-comers there; my first campaign; my appointment to the horse artillery; my service in the secretariat; return to military duty; the season at Sirmoori ending in my captivity; the pig-sticking party on the banks of the Ganges; the news of accession to fortune; love-making; the Barton family; marriage; the journey home, and horrible anxiety it occasioned, now passed away like a bad dream; my first acquaintance with Mr Paterson, and the ridiculous suspicions that would force themselves on my mind, do what I might to keep them down; our visit to Leatherby and Eva's gentle aunt, and Harry Perkins and all the people there; our picnic in Thorpe woods; and then, for the first time, there flashed upon me the recollection of my conversation with Mr Fergusson, and the hopes he confided to me about bringing in Squire Drew as member for the borough whenever a vacancy should occur. As all that had passed on that occasion was recalled to mind, a feeling quite of horror came over me at the possible misconstruction that might be put on my conduct in thus stealing a march on the other side, and after a bad quarter of an hour, I took the opportunity of a general waking up at Swindon to explain my dilemma to Herries. How it had suddenly occurred to me that my going down in this way to Leatherby, where I was already known, would certainly be observed; the difficulty of accounting for my visit to friends, while to conceal its object would seem unfair to the Conservatives, whose intentions I had become acquainted with unintentionally, yet so to speak in confidence.

My companion, however, made

light of these difficulties. "As for being seen," he said, "we shall get here before it is light, and as Sheepshanks lives out of the town, and never has any company, why, you may come and go without anybody being a bit the wiser."

"But then it seems so like stealing a march on the other side."

"That is just what we want to do. It is everything in such matters to be first in the field."

"Of course, and if I were a perfect stranger to the place, it would be all well enough. But then having been taken into the confidence of the other party, as it were, I confess I feel as if almost treacherous to be acting behind their backs."

"Well, but then this other party, as you call it, what does it really consist of? I have always understood that it did not exist. Did Drew himself tell you that he meant to come forward and fight whenever this vacancy happened?"

"I can't say that he did. It was my friend the doctor who confided to me the hopes of their party to secure one of the two seats in the borough by-and-by."

"Well, but, now really all this seems to me very shadowy and vague. If it had been a gentleman of my profession who worked the party, there might have been something in it; but the idea of being hindered by—I don't want to say anything against your friend, but you may be pretty sure that a country doctor will be much too anxious to keep his practice together, and too busy into the bargain, to meddle much with politics. And merely because this gentleman told you he should like to see a member returned of his way of thinking? Really, Captain West, you must excuse my saying that I cannot see the force of your scruples."

"I am very conscious that I must seem unreasonable; and, as you put the case, it looks absurd

enough ; but I cannot well make you understand how the thing came about, or the sort of relation I stand on with the other people in this matter. Here is Drew's daughter, a most intimate friend of Mrs West, brought up together, and living in the same house for years ; and now to go down secretly and make arrangements for cutting out her father ! Upon my word, I don't see how I am to do it."

"Well, I must say, Captain West," replied Herries, settling himself back in his corner of the carriage with an air of vexation, "it is a pity you did not think of these things before we started. If a man is to be thrown off an election by every fanciful notion that comes uppermost, or because somebody else wants the seat, he had better give up the idea of Parliament altogether."

As I looked at Mr Paterson taking his uneasy night's rest opposite, his face having slipped down into his comforter, till merely the top of his nose appeared, one eye covered with his wig now all awry under the jolting, and thought how the good-natured old gentleman had given up his proper night's rest through disinterested kindness on my behalf, and how my other companion had scarcely passed an hour out of a railway carriage since his return from America, and that he too had taken the matter up apparently through sheer friendliness, I felt very keenly the ungracious aspect my conduct would present to both of them, and perhaps still more so the ludicrousness of the situation, embarrassing as it seemed.

"You are quite justified in feeling annoyed," I answered after a pause ; "and, of course, I ought to have foreseen these complications sooner. But please do not misunderstand me. I am quite prepared to contest the election against any man. My difficulty does not lie there. What I am doubtful about

is the propriety of doing so without giving fair notice to the other side, especially as I had in confidence been made acquainted to a certain extent with their plans."

"But you are not going to contest an election. What you are going to do is to put certain questions to Mr Sheepshanks. Surely he is the proper person to speak to first ? There can be no call either in honour or common-sense to go running about Leatherby telling everybody that you have come down to ask Mr Sheepshanks a favour !"

"That way of putting the thing no doubt makes me look absurd, but——"

"Besides," interrupted Herries, to whom this argument had come up quite suddenly, and who therefore spoke as if he had kept it in view all along, "supposing that Mr Sheepshanks is committed already to some other applicant, or that for any other reason he declines to support you, would you not look rather foolish if you had let it be known that you had asked him ?"

"Certainly that way of putting it has great force."

"I can't see how there can be any other way of looking at it. Let us hear first what Sheepshanks says about the matter ; and if he goes in to back you up, there will be time enough then to consider your line of action. If he doesn't, why the less said about our journey the better."

This reasoning appeared at the time unanswerable, and indeed it was an immense comfort to have my qualms of conscience thus laid to rest ; but I objected that I could not hope to keep my visit a secret : the people at the station would be sure to recognise me.

"Well, for the matter of that, it will be quite dark when we arrive, but this train does not go on to Leatherby ; we shall have to stop at the junction, and I told Dobbins to telegraph for a carriage to meet us

there, so we shall drive through Leatherby without being seen."

To this there seemed to be nothing more to be replied, and I think we both fell asleep eventually, to awake at the Leatherby junction. It was still quite dark, but I thought I could detect the Fergusson mare as one of the pair in the carriage awaiting us, and as I carried my bag across the platform and deposited it in the carriage, I turned my coat-collar well up to prevent detection.

While on the way to the house, which lay about two miles beyond the town, I referred to the discussion which had taken place coming down, and said to Mr Paterson that although Mr Herries had satisfied the scruples I felt about the expedition generally, I still felt uneasy about the possession of the secret regarding Lord Wraymouth and his father. But Mr Paterson observed that the information was not mine but his, and conveyed to me in confidence; and added that at any rate it would be sufficient to let this point stand over till Mr Sheepshanks had the news. He might be safely trusted to take whatever action was needed and proper in a matter which concerned his old friend and fellow-member. There was nothing to be objected to so sensible a view, and we drove on in silence till our journey came to an end. Indeed the old gentleman looked tired and crusty, and not disposed for conversation.

Mr Sheepshanks' house and grounds lay in the valley of the Yew leading to Thorpe, which here expanded to a width sufficient to contain, besides some fields, a good-sized lawn and gardens with an acre or two of wood, all on the bank of the river, and separated from the main road by a thick-set hedge. We were not expected, for at Mr Herries's suggestion no announcement had been sent of our coming, and the footman and a housemaid were in the

act of shaking out the door-mats on the hall-steps, in a manner suggestive of a well-regulated flirtation between the two, notwithstanding the depressing influence of the chill morning fog which lay heavy on the lawn. Mr Paterson was at once recognised and we were shown into the dining-room, which looked cheerless and half-swept, and altogether our party seemed rather forlorn, the old gentleman especially, unshorn and unkempt, with his wig still awry, and I could not resist the feeling that we had come on a fool's errand. But the spirits of most of us are under the influence of external things; the coffee and tea brought in and the warm fire made while our rooms were being got ready soon revived the party; and as we went up to dress, the butler, who had just taken in the news of our arrival to his master's room, together with a jug of hot water of a size suggesting that the latter came to maturity before the days of tubbing, brought back word that Mr Sheepshanks would be glad to see Mr Paterson at eight o'clock in his study, and by that time my friend descended to the appointment looking quite a different man—shaven, his wig neatly brushed, brisk and cheery as ever. Herries meanwhile took a stroll in the garden, and I looked out of the breakfast-room window upon the river, the same stream that ran past Miss Barton's garden, feeling too excited for companionship; feeling also very much like a schoolboy whose papa has gone in to see the head-master and ask leave to take him out for the day; watching in a feeble way the ducks which had waddled up from the river and stood in a row on the lawn before the window. Their presence and expectation were presently explained by the entry of their mistress into the room, a middle-aged, delicate-looking, and shy lady, Miss Sheepshanks, who was evidently puzzled

to account for my visit, but quite incurious; it was explained sufficiently no doubt by my being in company with her old friend. Happily the ducks and the feeding of them did duty for conversation, and presently we were joined by Herries, and shortly afterwards by the other two gentlemen, when I could see from Mr Paterson's face that he was satisfied with what had passed, while Mr Sheepshanks' greeting was cordial and agreeable.

During breakfast the conversation was quite general. That over, Mr Paterson signified that Mr Sheepshanks wished to confer with us both, and we retired to his study. I looked to where Herries was standing, making a sort of mute inquiry whether he should not be invited to make one of the party, but neither Mr Paterson nor Mr Sheepshanks responded to the appeal, and as Herries did not seem to expect to be asked I passed in.

Mr Paterson then in his quiet way at once fell to business, sitting well back in an easy-chair, with his legs crossed, his elbows resting on the arms, and fingers pressed together. Mr Sheepshanks sat more upright, with his head a little on one side, and occasionally refreshing himself with a pinch of snuff. Mr Paterson's communication, for Mr Sheepshanks hardly spoke, was that the latter accepted his description of my soundness in political opinions and general eligibility—he must, I presume, have spoken much more warmly behind my back than he did now, to have carried his friend so heartily into the matter—and was prepared to give me his full support in the event of the vacancy occurring, with the proviso, however, that the Government agent should be first consulted. It was only due to the Government, Mr Sheepshanks thought, especially as Lord Wraymouth was a member of it, that he should ascertain whether there was

any one connected with it in particular need of a seat just now. If the Government had no special desire to be served at the present moment, then I could come forward with Mr Sheepshanks' full support.

I could not, under the circumstances, sympathise with his stanchness to his party so much as perhaps it deserved, but I could thoroughly appreciate his friendliness in thus taking up the cause of a perfect stranger so heartily, still more the great and disinterested kindness of our common friend who had brought about the arrangement.

Mr Paterson then mentioned what they thought should be done. First the Secretary to the Treasury must be referred to, but simultaneous preparations should be quietly made for organising a committee and inviting the support of the more influential residents of the place. At this point Mr Herries was summoned to join in the deliberation, and he at once proposed to return by the first train, and see the Secretary if possible before night. As regards local action, it was explained that Mr Sheepshanks could not take any direct part in the affair; but his Leatherby agent and factory manager would both of them no doubt be ready to serve on the committee, which would be the same thing as if he did so himself. The great thing, however, would be to bespeak the aid of Mr Rupert Bowles, who was the most active politician in the place; and accordingly the three gentlemen set off in Mr Sheepshanks' carriage, which had been waiting some time at the door, to call together on that gentleman, after which Herries was to start for town, first telegraphing to the Treasury whip to secure an appointment if possible for that evening. I would fain have returned too, to get out of what appeared to be a false position, but could not well desert Mr Paterson, who needed a night

in bed after his fatigues; so it was agreed that we two should remain till the following day.

The morning, I am bound to say, was a long one. Miss Sheepshanks was shy, and apparently unaccustomed to society of any kind, leading the life of a recluse. I learnt afterwards that, when first her father settled in the place and built his factory, a struggling man driven from the north by strikes, the county people had kept aloof from him; and afterwards when he became the richest man within twenty miles (even if the income rumour assigned to him were divided by four), he declined their advances, either by way of resenting their behaviour or because he had become accustomed to his solitary position, and occupied himself solely in business and good works, never appearing in public except to take the chair at a public meeting, and never speaking even then a word more than could be helped. Family sorrows may have had their influence too over his way of life: he had lost an only son, and his married daughter and her husband; and there now only remained to him the grandson at Harrow, destined, if he survived the fatal dampness of these low-lying meadows, to succeed him in the mill and his seat, and the middle-aged spinster with whom I was now endeavouring to maintain a conversation that should have the semblance of interest on either side. In her way Miss Sheepshanks was as unsophisticated as aunt Emily; certainly her acquaintance with people was smaller, for she never accompanied her father in his visits to London; and I suspect this was the first occasion of her meeting with a military man, at any rate a captain of horse artillery. However, everybody is interested about something, if you can only find out what it is; and next after her nephew her poultry and garden and the village schools occupied

Miss Sheepshanks' attention, and in going the round of these we became quite animated. Truly grateful, too, did I feel to a certain tame duck of special rarity and plumage, a dissertation on whose merits detained us for five minutes on the gravel path inside the highroad before emerging on the village green; for while under the shelter of the hedge who should ride past but Drew himself, on his market-day visit to Leatherby, riding slowly along on the grassy side, close to the hedge, avoiding the hot September sun.

Our tour ended, I repaired to my room to write the draft of my address to the electors, but deferred this undertaking for a nap, from which I was awakened by the return of Mr Paterson. Mr Rupert Bowles had been visited and had entered heartily into the affair, and Mr Scrap, the leading attorney, had been summoned to the mill and was also secured. Both these gentlemen, as well as Mr Hunter, the mill-manager, were coming to dinner, an announcement which evidently caused Miss Sheepshanks some trepidation, and her disappearance to the offices for the rest of the afternoon.

Mr Paterson and I then set to work upon the address, which we got through just as Mr Sheepshanks returned from his counting-house, and while reading it over a telegram for the former was brought in from the Leatherby station. It was from the lawyer at Lincoln and as follows: "Lord Stowe expired at half-past seven o'clock this morning." It had been addressed to the office in Gracechurch Street and thence forwarded on. Now, even if the telegraph clerk's education and knowledge of the aristocracy had not brought him to the point of understanding the relation between this event and the representation of Leatherby, the event would certainly be notified in

next morning's papers. I proposed, therefore, to walk into Leatherby and announce myself at once, but Mr Paterson suggested that all I could announce was that I had asked Mr Sheepshanks to support me and had only so far got a conditional answer, and this objection to immediate action seemed unanswerable.

However, the address was completed to our mutual satisfaction and despatched by messenger to Mr Handsaw, the Leatherby agent, to be sent up in charge of a trusty messenger by the evening train to town, and thence carried to a certain printing-office, which was warned by telegraph of his coming. The needful copies could thus be printed off during the night and brought down by early train the next morning, ready for posting up soon after mid-day, if the Treasury whip's reply should be auspicious.

Messrs Rupert Bowles, Scrap, and Hunter came to dinner; the evening would have been a dull one without them, for both our host and his daughter were almost silent, and Mr Paterson was tired after his night's journey. But Mr Bowles, a hale man with snow-white hair and whiskers, a ruddy face and dark eyes, kept us all from going to sleep, speaking in a loud cheery voice with a somewhat provincial, or, at least, homely accent. Mr Scrap was a tall, thin, gentlemanly-looking man, with a long, slightly-hooked nose, a stoop, and a double neckcloth and high shirt-collar that must have been worth ever so much per annum as a professional advertisement. A lawyer with that neck-tie must be a safe adviser. No direct allusions were made to the matter in hand so long as Miss Sheepshanks or the servants remained in the room; but afterwards the conversation came round at once to the point, and it was surprising to see the unreserved way in which the two visitors accepted me upon trust; whether it was

the effect of Mr Paterson's recommendation, or the all-sufficiency of being Mr Sheepshanks' nominee, certainly they never even so much as put me through my paces, but seemed to regard the whole matter as settled. "You must stand up for the old place, Captain West," said Mr Bowles; "Lord Wraymouth has always been a true friend to us. There's young Slowe, Dr Slowe's son, a clerk in the post-office, and doing uncommonly well I'm told, and Humphries too in the Poor Law Board, and quite high up in it now:" and he went on to enumerate various other preferments conferred, from which it appeared that Lord Wraymouth, who in the course of his long public career had been the round of almost all the state departments, without ever rising, however, to the top of any, had left behind him a legacy in each in the shape of a son of some deserving inhabitant, including, as Mr Bowles might have added, but did not at the time, that promising member of the civil service, Mr Rupert Bowles, junior, or, as he styled himself on his card, Mr R. Podger Bowles (Mrs Bowles was a Miss Podger), a clerk in the Treasury, and regarded by the rising generation of Leatherby as the personification of London fashion, whose name appeared every year in the list of visitors at Lady Elizabeth Merrifield's receptions, and other distinguished entertainments.

I ventured to observe that these recognitions of Leatherby merit most probably dated from a time prior to the introduction of open competition, and Mr Bowles admitted that these were degenerate days; whereon we fell to discussing the hunting capabilities of the country, and the chances of finding some place in the neighbourhood where Mrs West and I could settle down for the winter. Mr Scrap's remarks during our little private conversation by the tea-table

turned principally on the desire of Mrs Scrap to become better acquainted with me, and the regard she had always entertained for Eva. Politeness prevented my replying that I had never heard Eva express any similar feeling, nor could I remember indeed having seen that lady among the numerous callers during our visit.

There was, of course, some talk about the prospect of a contested election, and I found it was generally understood that the other party would at least try to bring Drew forward; but Mr Scrap was very decided that he had not the ghost of a chance, while Mr Bowles doubted whether he would be got to face the expense. Not a word, by the way, was said about the expenses on our side, but I knew this matter might safely be left in Mr Paterson's hands, and, moreover, felt perfectly indifferent about it.

The next morning was beautiful enough to tempt the veriest sluggard from his bed, much less a man who had not yet lost the habit of early rising; but I had scarcely dressed, and was stepping into the garden, when the servant handed me a telegram from Mr Paterson's room which had just arrived, and to receive which the old gentleman had been awakened an hour before his proper time. It was from Herries: "Glissereene entirely agrees, and thinks the proposed arrangement very suitable." Glissereene was the Treasury whip. Here, then, were all the obstacles removed so far as could be seen. My success so far seemed wonderful. I was obliged to take a sharp turn round the garden to keep down the elation of spirits this news caused, and, on returning, found Mr Sheepshanks coming out for his morning stroll, for he too was an early man. He admitted that there was now no longer any need for concealment, and I therefore arranged to walk into Leatherby,

there being just time to get there for Miss Barton's half-past eight o'clock breakfast, and Mr Paterson would pick me up on his way to catch the ten o'clock train. After all it would be a cheap bit of candour, for the news would probably not get beyond aunt Emily's household before the afternoon, and the handbills and posters were due from town by two. Accordingly, bidding appropriate adieus to my hosts, I set off in the fresh morning air along the dusty road, passing on my way the celebrated spot whence, looking back, you see the view which reminded Deedes, R.A., of the Trossachs.

The household in Church Street were at prayers when I arrived, as I could infer from Hannah's stealthy movement out of the parlour to answer my knock, and from the fact that her sister, the cook, was discovered in that apartment on my entry there. My appearance excited of course much surprise, and I had to assure everybody several times over that no accident had happened either to Eva or Sybil, or even to Annette. Mary Drew was absent, having gone on a visit to friends at Stampton, so, as I sat down to breakfast with the two elder ladies, my news was the easier to tell; but it took some time for them to apprehend its purport clearly, if indeed Miss Honoria understood what it was about after all, which seemed doubtful. Under the circumstances I felt no scruple in asking them to say nothing on the matter till they should hear of it from outside, which would be early in the afternoon when the address arrived from town. This would give my supporters the satisfaction of being the first to communicate the news. Breakfast over, the carriage with Mr Paterson called to pick me up, and I started with him for town, leaving the aunts in great joy at the prospect of their nieces' speedy return.

NEW BOOKS.

WE have often been told that there is nothing so interesting to mankind as those records of individual men which reveal to us a real personality in real circumstances, such as we are capable of comparing and contrasting with our own. The same principle, somewhat widened out and extended, applies to nations as well as individuals. Notwithstanding all the commonplaces of the traveller, with which we are so familiar, every intelligent attempt to set our next neighbours before us in their daily habits and the fashion of their lives is full of interest. In England, however, our custom of travelling, and the feeling common to most educated persons that they themselves know as much about other countries as any but the very wisest and most experienced observers can tell them, has damped the production of those books of national gossip, if we may use such an expression, which are in general such strange compounds of foolishness and good sense—of the true and the absolutely false. An Englishman who would write such a book about France as the 'Notes on England' of M. Taine, would, we fear, be viewed with more derision than admiration by his countrymen; and such readers as he attained would probably peruse his book with an incipient sense of offence, holding it, consciously or not, as an impertinence that he should thus have ventured to claim superior information. Yet we have not on this account lost our interest in the people next door. On the contrary, our deeper acquaintance with them (or, at least, what we suppose

to be our deeper acquaintance) leads us into inquiries more solemn in their character, and to conclusions quite as sweeping, and not so easily disproved when they are erroneous, as those which rest upon mere matters of fact. Such a book as the collection of essays lately published by Mr Henry Reeve, and entitled 'Royal and Republican France,'* takes much higher ground than the notes of any tourist. Framed without any distinct plan, following the course of literature rather than that of events, a collection of critical essays on French books, written during a period which has been of the deepest importance to France, and has changed, and over again changed, the face of affairs within her, becomes, almost unconsciously, a work upon French history. A certain amount of intention, if only so much as is implied in a distinct personal appreciation of the subject, gives at once significance and importance to the collection; and without being full or perfect, the book of Mr Reeve is enough to lead the reader on from one salient point to another, leaving him in possession of a thread of philosophical guidance over much broken ground, by which his recollections as well as the information he has acquired, may gain the value of continuity and coherence. The confusion into which the mind is thrown by every first attempt to master a period of history—the impossibility at first of sifting the important from the unimportant, and determining which fact affects the grand question and which belongs to the details of the day—becomes

* *Royal and Republican France.* By Henry Reeve, Corresponding Member of the French Institute. Longmans. 1872.

doubly bewildering when the period we study is recent, and all the side-lights of individual recollections and opinions come in to bewilder the scarcely-settled historical view. In the midst of this perplexity such a book as Mr Reeve's is a real advantage to the reader who wishes to discover some articulate connection between the different chapters of the tumultuous tragedy which has been so often acted and reacted in France. "The papers collected in these volumes," he says, "were first written and published in various Reviews, at intervals extending over a period of nearly thirty years. But although the occasions and incidents by which they were originally suggested were diverse and multifarious, they have not the less a common purpose—to trace throughout the history and politics of modern France, the causes and results of the Revolution which has profoundly affected the forms of government and the state of society in that country." It is therefore the Revolution which is, in a manner, the subject of this book—not in the lurid and terrible pictures of '93, which have been so often set before us; but in its more subtle influences—in the profound unsettling of all men's works and ways, the overthrow of the Old World, the invention of a fantastic new one, with new creeds and prejudices, of which it has been the origin. The world once hoped, fondly and foolishly as it has proved, that it had got rid of that appalling apparition which frightened it half out of its senses, and that the French Revolution had disappeared like other ghosts. But it did not require the experience of the last two years to convince many thoughtful people that the ghost was far from being laid, and the world far from being done with it. The principles of '89 have been claimed by all

liberal Frenchmen as the standing-ground and foundation of their liberties—even by many to whom the Revolution could convey only images of horror; and there can be little doubt that the tremendous events which followed, and which were as little in accord with the principles of '89 as with the New Testament, made a still deeper impression on the minds of the people. These events taught the lawless their power. They taught the miserable what strength lay in their numbers, and how, if luxury itself was not attainable, it was always possible for a bitter and exasperated crowd to revenge itself upon those who possessed it. Perhaps, however, the most terrible of all the results of the Revolution has been precisely that one which, according to its first theory, was rendered impossible—the division of classes—which has become a much more profound and essential division than any which mere external circumstances could make. The vast internal rent and severance which exists in France between the reasonable class, which desires a practicable and honest liberty, and the masses who long to be delivered from every bond, whether of law or nature, is one which is much more appalling, and much less likely to be ever mended, than even the most tremendous division between rich and poor, noble and common. Divisions of rank do not annihilate the unity of human nature, but divisions of this description do. The very existence of the multitude of ignorant people who, in France, believe it possible to annihilate all the laws of political economy, and to set up an arbitrary rule in society as tyrannous as the ancient régime, only differing from it in the fact that the privileges of the new reign are transferred to the other extremity of society—from the rich

to the poor—is an instance of the power of the Revolution such as nothing can equal. Mr Reeve, as we shall see, takes this into serious consideration as one of the most important features of the crisis; and he also affords us an admirable sketch of the position and circumstances of that remnant of able, enlightened, and high-minded Frenchmen, who, for the last twenty years, have been set aside from all share in the practical management of their country, and who, hating the tyranny of the Empire on the one hand, and still more deeply hating the tyranny of the mob on the other, have been driven together like a hunted herd, threatened on both sides, and without sufficient agreement among themselves to maintain even a bold front to their adversaries. We cannot conceive of any sadder or more hopeless position, or one which calls for profounder sympathy. So long as the majority of a people believe that liberty can be procured by a periodical whirl round of society, in which everything that is undermost shall come uppermost, and by which all the laws of natural equilibrium shall be annihilated, the prospect is a very bad one for the lovers of true and practicable freedom. It is true that nature, whose laws cannot be annihilated, asserts herself after every whirl, and sets the lower side under once more as soon as she has placed somebody uppermost who can, at least temporarily, wield something like authority; but the fact that the French people, with all their logical power, have remained unconvinced by these perpetual recurrences of repression, is the strongest of all proofs how warmly the first impulse of Revolution was communicated to the national soul, and how tenaciously and obstinately it holds its place there, in spite of all arguments, and even the kind of demon-

stration which is most difficult to bear.

Mr Reeve leads us through many stirring scenes, and many melancholy ones, as he pursues his study of the Revolution. He shows us its incubation in the end of Louis XIV.'s splendid and miserable reign. He makes it visible to us in the tragic and terrible scenes which we identify as those of the Revolution *par excellence*; in the misfortunes of Marie Antoinette and the struggle of Mirabeau; he shows us Napoleon's immense and wonderful attempt to master it, as described in the recollections of Beugnot and Mollien. Then comes the curious lull after the Restoration, the gradual commencement of new mischief, the heavings of the volcano which everybody had believed comfortably extinct, but which broke out again in 1830, to be once more repressed and tried with new discipline under Louis Philippe; until the moment arrived for the next periodical outburst, and Louis Philippe shared the fate of his predecessors, and another struggle, followed by another repression—the severest and most galling of all—recurred in a certain rhythmical order, as by some strange necessity of fate. Throughout all, the Revolution one and indivisible—like that dream-Republic so often set up to be knocked down again, first by one party, then by another—raises its head, multiplying and expanding itself into new forms, losing none of its vitality, and few of its habits of thought. “You take their guns from them,” said Montalembert, in one of his great speeches, “but the ideas remain;” and marvellously have those ideas survived. How the Empire brought its tremendous arguments to bear upon them—how the legitimate branch of the Bourbons brought tradition, divine right, all the influences of the past—how the Orleans monarchs

tried constitutionalism, the Parliamentary rule which England believes in, and which so many nations have tried from her to catch the trick of—and how, after all was done, a second Empire, servile yet feeble imitator of the first, again attempted the task of convincing the nation that Revolution was over, and its power ended,—is to be seen in Mr Reeve's book, with all the animation and diversity which are given by a crowd of witnesses all speaking of their own knowledge, and adding unawares their evidence at this wonderful trial. Few people nowadays believe the Revolution to be over; and the consecutive character of its different developments is an interesting study. How long Parliamentarianism may hold its day now, or who are the next leaders who are to contest France with the sleepless, restless, lawless demon who has consumed her energies for so long, it is impossible to tell. That they may be wise as well as strong, honest, and patriotic — lovers of liberty, not of repression—and that they may have courage enough to look their adversary in the face, without panic or superstition, is all that the best friend of France can venture to say.

The thread of history which runs through these essays does not weaken the individual interest possessed by several of them, which touch upon ground comparatively untrodden. We select specially for this commendation the essays on De Tocqueville, which give a clear and able sketch of his character and work. No better type could be found of that modern chivalry of France, not many in number but great in character, and who, perhaps unfortunately for their country, are chiefly produced from among the old noble families to whom we have already referred. These noble gentlemen, who have been

forced to stand aside for years and see their country managed or mismanaged by the servile and interested officials of a despotic power—who have been condemned to look on impotent and watch the progress of national debasement without the means of freeing their soul even by indignant remonstrance or reproof—merit the highest sympathy of which a generous mind is capable. It is with a very pang of pity that we remember how their hearts must have burned within them many a weary day while all this misery which their country has endured was preparing for her under their eyes. Many of them, whose qualities were not such as to acquire fame, have died namelessly for France in the late conflict, suffering as no others could in the warfare, yet glad to prove, by the sacrifice of their honourable lives, that devotion to her which they were permitted to show in no other way. But De Tocqueville was not a nameless member of this spotless band. Perhaps no Frenchman has attained to so true, so clear, and so valuable an appreciation of the constitution of a foreign country as he has done, and certainly none has brought a more enlightened or a more competent intellect to the discussion of political subjects. The author of one of the greatest political and constitutional studies of modern times; a most acute and penetrating intelligence, without prejudice or *parti pris*; asking nothing better than to serve his country under almost any practicable conditions which should leave freedom of independent speech and action—he was thrust aside by the Empire from all influence on political life as peremptorily and as conclusively as if he had been the merest tyro and meddler. Mr Reeve quotes a very interesting letter from which we take the following passage, showing how

entirely De Tocqueville himself understood the situation. It contains, besides, one of those curious prophetic glimpses of the course of events which are always so interesting to the spectator who has it in his power to compare what has happened with what was expected to happen, and who with a certain sense of superiority can note the prevision which was right from that which was amusingly and oddly mistaken.

"I perceive" (De Tocqueville writes soon after the *coup d'état*) "that you have carried with you into your retreat the same agitation of mind which I still find in the bustle of the world. How should it be otherwise? Which way are we now to look in France for objects which do not awaken sad thoughts? And if we move out of France it would not fare better with us, for the disease is in us as well as around us. Lanjuinais, who is in Italy, writes that the remembrance of France puts out the glory of the arts and the sun.

"We must, however, make up our minds to what is taking place, and not disguise from ourselves that this will last a considerable time. As for me, I can only recover that state of mind which is necessary to my studies by satisfying myself that I am out of public affairs for a long while, and that the thing is now to form new habits and create new interests. This is not the way of the world. I am continually meeting people full of the most absurd delusions—real delusions of *émigrés*—who set themselves gravely to compute how many months this Government has to live. As for me, I stand by what I have said. *It will found nothing*, but it will last. With far greater strength than the Republican Government, it has the same advantage of being a neutral ground on which both the Monarchical parties find a temporary refuge, and which they prefer to the camp of their former antagonists. This is especially true of the Legitimists, who are not only well received, but encouraged to come in by all sorts of petty artifices, which succeed the more easily as many are not averse to

be caught by them. Thus they say that the famous memorandum the President is to leave (to designate his successor) will name the Count de Chambord. . . . The other day Lady Douglas told somebody that the President hated marriage, disliked his family, and would, no doubt, if not provoked, leave the Government to the lawful sovereign."

A report analogous to the curious one thus recorded—to the effect that the Count de Chambord had, on his side, designated Napoleon as his successor—was, we know, current in Bonapartist circles not very long ago. The alliance is a quaint one even when existing only in imagination.

"There is nothing for us to do until liberal opinions are once again in France," De Tocqueville adds. Before that time came, if it has now come—before the iron rule relaxed and the fatal moment of revolution came round again—this eminent Frenchman had ended a life which ought to have been so important to his country, but which her strange and terrible destiny rendered almost useless to her. Ten years later, sequestered in the very same way, and made into a powerless spectator of the national career which he had no power to influence, died Count de Montalembert. Notwithstanding all the peculiarities of the latter, which, in the opinion of many, limited his legitimate influence, he was a man of high attainments and much political insight. During the interval between the Revolution of 1848 and the events of 1851, both these men made an energetic, and, we may almost say, desperate attempt, putting aside all their individual prejudices and peculiarities, to establish a real popular Government in France. They both died silenced and set aside, lookers-on and passive sufferers from the evils they could do nothing to avert.

The immense waste of power involved in such facts as these is deplorable to think of. Thus over and over again France has prepared herself to meet dangers which required all her strength, by binding up, as it were, her right hand before she entered the conflict.

Mr Reeve's essay upon the state of France in 1870 is full of real appreciation of the condition of the country, and gives a very true and reliable view of some of its aspects least known to Englishmen. The following sketch, for example, of the class of peasant proprietors, of whom we have heard so much, seems to us thoroughly trustworthy and full of real understanding. Mr Reeve has just pointed out the fact that, so far back as the beginning of the eighteenth century, "the creation of a peasant proprietary was already advocated as the panacea of the nation."

"To this hour, this is the result of all the revolution which is most loudly applauded by French writers of the greatest learning and authority, as, for example, by M. Doniol (now Prefect at Grenoble), from whose instructive history of the rural classes in France we have borrowed the foregoing facts. It is equally admired by those English writers who seek in the democracy of France the model of the reforms they desire to introduce into this country in the tenure of property and the organisation of society. We may therefore assume that this state of things is regarded as highly beneficial; and so undoubtedly it has proved in the improvement of the condition of the peasantry when liberated from feudal burdens, which have happily no parallel amongst ourselves. But our object at this moment is to point out, as a simple fact, that the change involved the extinction of the social and political influence of the upper classes; for the abuse of the feudal tenures and the vices of an aristocracy, identified by its sources of revenue and its habits of expenditure with the Court, had engendered throughout France a fierce

hatred of social inequality, which has gone on increasing to this day, though the causes in which it originated have long disappeared. The services, therefore, which may be rendered to a nation by a class of educated proprietors and capitalists—by the performance of the public duties of their station, by the improvement of cultivation, and rural administration, and by the local influence of men solicitous for the common interest of those around them—are in a great measure lost to France. There is no 'public spirit,' to use a most emphatic and characteristically English term. Even on the larger estates, in the hands of those who are capable of discharging the duties of a resident gentry, the good offices of the wealthy are regarded with suspicion and hostility, as great perhaps as when those duties wore the invidious shape of feudal privileges. The result has been, to a considerable extent, to displace the educated classes from their natural position as the leading servants of the public in local and political affairs. There is a chasm between them and the surrounding peasantry which is rarely crossed; and the peasantry would certainly refuse to recognise in the gentry the champions or representatives of their own interests.

It was one of the boasts of the authors of the French Revolution that they had destroyed the spirit of *caste*, and had substituted for it that Equality and Fraternity which are still inscribed upon the ruins of Paris. By *caste* is meant certain divisions in society, based on religious or social observances, which are absolutely exclusive and self-contained, and arrogate to themselves a superiority which their fellow-creatures and fellow-countrymen are forbidden to share. . . . But the spirit of caste is not confined to nobles, or priests, or lawyers. It may exist just as strongly, and spread over a broader area, in the ranks of the people. We say, then, that it does exist, and with great intensity, in modern France. The revolution which destroyed the upper castes of society created the lower—quite as exclusive, quite as intolerant, quite as tyrannical. The peasants of France form a dominant caste in the rural districts. The workmen form a dominant caste in the towns. Neither of these bodies of men

will endure the slightest interference with their notions of privilege. Neither of them will work beyond the interests and prejudices of their own order. Both are alike jealous of each other, and of any other kind of superiority. Both regard any departure from their own peculiar habits and pursuits as a derogation from their own dignity. They act together among themselves as long as their interests are identical, and as long as there is a perfect equality between them; but as soon as any man is in a condition to play a more conspicuous part in the country, he ceases to be one of themselves, and they no longer trust him. They regard him, on the contrary, with envy, jealousy, and aversion. This is precisely the spirit of caste in its most odious and mischievous form; although the democracy of France would probably be surprised if they knew that we laid to their charge precisely the same vice of exclusiveness which they imputed to the old aristocracy and the nobles."

How true this is, and how profound is the division thus made in the available forces of the country, everybody will agree who has any acquaintance with France at the present crisis of her history.

M. Taine's* book about England is about as different as it is possible to conceive from Mr Reeve's book about France. It is somewhat difficult to understand how a writer whose reputation is so great, and, we believe, so well deserved, should have ventured to commit himself to many of the statements audaciously given to the world in this very droll volume; or how a man capable of the real comprehension which shows itself here and there, should have rendered his book ridiculous by the rash and foolish adoption of many of the stories with which wags everywhere play on a stranger's credulity. These notes, we are informed, were originally published in the '*Temps*,' and, according to the preface, at-

tracted attention "wherever French newspapers circulate and the French language is read." "Almost contemporaneously a selection from them translated into English appeared," the translator continues, "in the '*Daily News*.' Wherever English is read these translations furnished matter for talk and discussion." It is thus with a book which has been circulated, talked about, and commented upon by the whole civilised world—for wherever civilisation exists either French or English must be known and read—that we have to do. And such an introduction ought to be sufficient to call the reader's grave, and indeed almost reverential, attention to opinions so widely received, and which are no doubt likely to influence the mind of the world respecting us to an unusual degree, and to fix for ever any of the lines of our traditional character which may have begun to wane or grow faint. This being the case, it is painful to be obliged to state that M. Taine's impressions of us are not generally agreeable. There are many points in which he commends us. He admires our babies and our young women; he gives a very pleasant view of our universities, and a fair one of our public schools; he is half touched, half amused, and wholly surprised, by our ideas of hospitality; and the same effect is produced upon him by our domestic institutions, the romantic ideas about marriage which he finds to be general, and the wonderful machinery of comfort of which he speaks in curious detail, as we might speak of the odd surroundings of a South Sea Islander. But to modify these favourable impressions there are a great many which are not favourable. First, as a general principle, he sets us down as a race of specially marked carni-

* *Notes on England.* By H. Taine, D.C.L. Oxon. Strahan & Co., London.

vora, from the fact of our long sharp ogre-like teeth, which he declares to be universal, and which, he allows, he finds it quite impossible to endure; and of our fleshiness, redness, puffiness, and voracity. He dislikes our food, which is not wonderful—and our dress, which we may also allow to pass as an objection which was to be expected; but what is somewhat odd is that, notwithstanding all the conventional amount of fog which we expect in a Frenchman's picture of England, he finds the hues of our landscapes as violent as the hues of our garments, and objects to the herbage as he objects to the young ladies in Hyde Park. "The colours are false and discordant," he says; "the turnip-leaves have a violet or harsh green, the light plants shine in the sun with a display too dazzling and too alight. The country resembles a large manufactory of fodder, the vestibule of a dairy or a slaughter-house." "The country is all verdure," he complains again; "the eyes are satiated, glutted with it." In another place there are groups of plants, rhododendrons, which overwhelm him—they are beyond nature. "Sometimes, indeed, the effect is too strong—in the sun it is overpowering; the incomparable verdure then assumes tones so rich and intense that they cannot be transferred to canvas; they would offend the mind, they would be too raw." This strikes us as rather an unkind cut, for if there was one thing in which we believed we might innocently rejoice as an attribute of England which no foreign critic *could* object to, it was our greenness, our homely bloom of nature. But M. Taine's mind is evidently possessed with a theory in respect to English feeding, against which such feeble things as facts would have but small chance. He sees milk and meat in the landscape; it breathes of heavy din-

ners, just as the fat, fresh-coloured Englishman in the railway carriage whispers roast-beef in every line of him. So far does he carry this theory, that after informing us what are the wages of agricultural labourers—nine, ten, rarely twelve shillings a-week—he adds a piece of information which would very much puzzle these unfortunates. "Since agriculture has been transformed," he says, "the tastes of the stomach have altered. Fifty years ago meat was a luxury among the peasants; they ate it but once a-week: in winter they had salt meat only; now they require fresh meat every day."

This extreme carnivorousness produces, as is natural, an absence of sensibility, which is displayed even in the most delicate individuals of the species. Those long walks and rides which are made possible by that "rude, unfeeling health which startles delicate foreign ladies," are to our girls what fiery wines and spirits are to their brothers and fathers—an instance of the constitutional heaviness which requires extreme stimulants to rouse it. And the same reason makes "even ladies remain, out of choice, in the wind and rain, exposed to be blown about and drenched. The inclemency of the weather pleases them." All these eccentricities, in M. Taine's opinion, "denote senses less delicate" than those of his country-folks. The men find Bordeaux and Burgundy insipid for a similar reason. "Amongst the middle class, ale, stout, or porter are preferred, especially brandy-and-water, a kind of grog in which the half is spirit; to please them it is necessary that the beverage should be rough or fiery—their palate must be either scratched or scraped." The same robustness and unsusceptible nature acts in a still more decided way in another point. "A skilful physician who prescribes for a

Frenchman does not give him more than half a dose; the English dose would be too strong for him, and would hurt him. An Englishman often keeps calomel by him, and takes a pill of it when he feels his head rather heavy; the medicines here might be compounded for French horses." Everything proves this force of *vis inertia*, which requires exceptional measures to rouse it to any sort of feeling. One of M. Taine's many friends who communicate to him the doubtful advantage of their observations, is profoundly struck with this "inertness of the nervous system" in witnessing a game of cricket on Kew Green. "Seven or eight English boys were there pitching the ball," he says, with evident understanding. "Certainly they could not help blundering or missing now and then; yet during upwards of an hour and a half there was not a single cry, not a single remark made in a loud voice, and in a tone of reproach. They pitched the ball about, changed places, doing it all with the utmost coolness, and in perfect silence."

This is the foundation theory in M. Taine's mind about England; a great inert giant, gorging heavily, finding it difficult to put himself in motion, rousing himself by strong potations, by violent exercise, into a dull sort of *quasi* life, is to him the impersonation of an Englishman. The figure is something like the Brobdingnagian of Gulliver. Largeness, gross structure, and heavy ways, necessitate violence in everything that gives the monster what he calls pleasure. Therefore his very turnip-leaves get to be like copper-foil, his womenkind require to dazzle him with colour, his sports have to be tremendous fatigues. Nothing less will move him. The languid Englishman of the nineteenth century must feel a

certain delightful thrill of new sensation in finding himself thus regarded.

But, at all events, whether or not his readers may be ready to play this part of typical Englishmen, M. Taine has shown himself capable of the rôle of typical Frenchman, to us a much more amusing personage. He moves about with quaint briskness, taking up superficial details and generalising upon them with a cleverness that is delightful. His quick outside observations, his lively pen, his attention always on the strain, and the rapid conclusions he comes to on such amusingly alight ground, are all perfectly characteristic. M. Taine sees among his private friends a good many portfolios of drawings, and is aware that in Rotten Row twenty times as many ladies appear on horseback as are to be seen in the Bois de Boulogne. From these two indisputable facts he draws the perfectly reasonable conclusion that "there are always one or two painters in water-colours in a family, and every one rides on horseback once a-day." Again, he is aware that English marriages are, or are supposed to be, generally love marriages, and that the eldest son is, after the father, the head of a family; and generalising from this he arrives at another conclusion in respect to the young ladies of England, which is so charming that it is a thousand pities it should not be true. "In order to marry," he says, "it is necessary that they should feel a passion. Many do not marry in consequence of a thwarted inclination, and continue to live with their eldest brother." We need add nothing to a picture so enchanting. Imagination immediately conjures up before us a number of sweet country-houses where the ladies who have not "felt a passion," or who have had their inclinations

thwarted, continue to live with their eldest brother. Talk of family union in France! If we may take it on M. Taine's word, we are on this point the most superior people on the face of the earth. A great many sketches of the position of unmarried women in England have been presented to us by persons very intimately concerned, but none so delightful as this. At another place our author tells that of the many English girls "who remain spinsters—some are in almost every family, the position of aunt being very well filled. They help to rear the children, superintend a part of the household, preserve-making or the linen-cupboard, make herbariums, paint in water-colours, read, write, become learned." It is with difficulty that we tear ourselves from this amiable presentation of the English people in their family life. M. Taine is very fond of painting in water-colours. Had he but seen the epitaph of the famous Mrs Jones, who possessed that quality, and who was first cousin to the Earl of Cork, as all readers are aware, what a diverting little commentary would he have made upon the connection so characteristic of the English people between a favourite accomplishment and an invisible reward! "She was bland, affable, and deeply religious; she painted in water-colours, and of such are the kingdom of heaven." How truly would all the characteristic English qualities have been embodied to the French observer in this memorable enumeration! the aristocratic sentiment, the love of occupation, the reference to an unseen world; would that some of his many friends had thrown this masterpiece of mortuary eloquence in the philosopher's way!

Another of his highly characteristic English anecdotes, however, is

somewhat opposed to the necessity of "feeling a passion" in order to marry. It is told to illustrate another peculiarity of our character, the sensible way in which our girls prepare for the contingencies of unmarried life. "N——, who comes to England every year, visited one of his old friends, wealthy, and the father of a family, who said to him, 'I am put out; my daughter Jane is twenty-four, does not marry, frequently shuts herself up in the library, and reads solid works.' 'What dower will you give her?' 'Two thousand pounds.' 'And your sons?' 'The eldest will have the estate; the second, a mine which yields two thousand pounds.' 'Give five thousand pounds to Miss Jane.' This phrase opened up vistas to the father; he gave her the five thousand pounds. Miss Jane has been married, she has a baby; she was made to be a mother; it would have been a pity to have converted her into a learned, spectacled spinster." "As for me," adds M. Taine, "what I admire here is the coolness, the good sense, the courage of the young girl, who, seeing herself in a blind alley, alters her course without a murmur, and silently sets herself to study." This, of course, as we all know, is the habit of girls in England. Twenty-four, perhaps, is an early age to begin; but there or thereabouts, the young women who have not felt a passion, and who intend to continue to live with their eldest brother, betake themselves to "solid works" in the paternal library. We hope they do not all become members of the Social Science Association, however, as M. Taine vaguely and terribly hints; but we cannot refrain from thanking him, with a deep sense of obligation, for this novel and touching picture of the English girl.

Before, however, leaving the interesting subject of English girls,

we may be allowed to remonstrate tenderly with M. Taine for some little external mistakes which, from a man who understands English feminine character and habits so thoroughly, and who is at the same time a Frenchman, bound by his nationality to be observant of dress and appearance, and professing himself so, we have found disappointing. Did he ever really meet with young ladies walking in Hyde Park, with "gloves of immaculate whiteness," or in dresses of white tulle with golden zones; and if he did so, is he sure they were not maiden chimney-sweeps a-Maying, or ladies of some passing circus? And then it is unkind of him to find fault with "the extraordinary white" of a lady's shoulders, which, though "the petals of a lily, the gloss of satin, do not come near it, is not lifelike," he says, to his eyes; and to speak, with his usual horror of bright colours, of a "white row of teeth" like "a crude patch on red lips." Coffee-colour may be a better colour for wear, but red and white have a traditionary acceptance among men, as the most desirable hues for complexion. "A rose-coloured dress, wreath of red flowers, green trimmings, and a golden necklace around the throat like a savage queen," may be an objectionable toilet to those who are so unfortunate as to meet with it; but "a neck and shoulders resembling snow, or rather mother-of-pearl," have a good deal to be said for them. We do not make any protest against the condemnation of English wives, who, though faithful and virtuous, are wearisome, M. Taine thinks, "have no talent for making themselves fascinating and enticing at home; are unacquainted with a number of fine and delicate graces," and are not clever enough to invent "minor means of reawakening love or fondness"—but their white shoulders!

Surely there is something to be said for them.

We fear that in our devotion to M. Taine we may exhaust the patience of our readers; but there are a few of his observations still which are much too good to lose. Here is a scene, for instance, which we have never had the gratification to behold ourselves, but which must be, since so lively an observer vouches for it. "In the fashionable neighbourhoods, beneath the vestibule, about five o'clock in the evening, the butler seated, newspaper in hand, sips a glass of port; around him ushers, corded lackeys, footmen with their sticks, gaze with an indolent and lordly air upon the middle-class passers-by. . . . These are the favourites of creation, the best fed, the most easy-going, all chosen and picked in order to act as specimens of the nation's *physique*." We should like much to see such a group through the open door of a house in Mayfair. What an opportunity it would be for a painter! M. Taine has a complete understanding of the English domestic and his privileges. On the Derby day, he tells us, all classes mingle. "P——, one of our party, has met his usual coachman at table with a gentleman, two ladies, and a child. The gentleman had employed, and then invited, the coachman. The coachman introduces P——, who is amicably compelled to drink port, sherry, stout, and ale. In fact, to-day, it is hail-fellow-well-met; but this lasts for a day only, after the manner of the ancient saturnalia. On the morrow the distinctions of rank will be as strong as ever, and the coachman will be respectful and distant, as is his wont." It is very odd to us how the English translator could have handed on such a passage as this to an English audience, without a remonstrance or a word of explanation. If such traveller's

tales are accepted as gospel wherever the French language is read, it is but right that a mild protest should sometimes meet the author's ear, when the medium of communication is English. The Derby day altogether, however, seems to have made a very bewildering impression on M. Taine; and it is clear that his ideas of what is meant by the word "gentleman," must have grown confused in the midst of the crowd. The evident mistakes of our author in this respect, indeed, reveal to us a very likely way of accounting for some of his blunders; for a great deal of misapprehension is likely the moment it becomes possible that the observer has transposed the manners of one class into the atmosphere of another. A very droll story, which is current in Oxford, throws partial light also upon another way in which life may have been travestied to the Frenchman. A great Oxford Don, whom it is unnecessary to name, went to the chief inn of the place, according to this story, to seek the distinguished stranger, and found him at dinner, consuming with what appetite he might a plate of roast-beef accompanied by *buttered toast*. "What is that you are eating?" asked the astonished Don. "It is quite right—it is the dish of the country," said the visitor, pointing out to the amazed beholder the *carte*, upon which "roast-beef and potatoes" was inscribed. *Potatoes*, as the reader will see if he tries, when pronounced quickly, with a distinct emphasis on the first, and a moderate one on the last syllable, sounds extremely like *buttered toast*. As such the waiter had understood the order; and the philosopher consumed the greasy accompaniment with distress, but complacency, making his notes all the time on the terrible habitudes of this flesh-consuming people. He says nothing, certainly, about the

buttered toast; but he describes the "large portions of fat meat and vegetables without sauce," which were served up to him in "twenty taverns" in succession, with an internal shudder which it is easy enough to understand.

This book contains also some extraordinary economical statements, which prove a not unnatural confusion of another kind. "Fifteen hundred pounds of income," says M. Taine, when describing the life of well-to-do families in England, "three to four horses, two carriages, six servants, a gardener. The same style of living," he adds with charming simplicity, "*would require nearly the same outlay in France.*" Where is the happy spot to be found where a family can do all this upon fifteen hundred a-year! On another page we are informed that "to keep three horses and a carriage costs *nearly* £200 a-year!" One more anecdote about expenditure, and we have done with the absurd side of M. Taine's book. He has just informed his readers that he had seen a collection of works of art, belonging to Lord Hereford, (query, Hertford?) and adds, in pure wantonness of knowledge, the following wonderful story: "In 1848, he (Lord H.) said to one of his French friends, greatly disgusted and a little put out,—'I have a mansion in Wales which I have never seen; but which, I am told, is very fine. Every day, dinner for twelve is served there, and the carriage drawn up at the door, in case I should arrive. The butler eats the dinner. Go thither, make yourself at home; you see that it will not cost you a farthing.'"
M. Taine's comment upon this astounding story is quaintly calm and composed. He is not surprised by it—he knows the English too well to be surprised at anything. "Naturally," he says, "fine things accumulate in these wealthy hands."

All this nonsense is a great deal more amusing than good sense, and consequently, we have scarcely left ourselves room to do justice to our French visitor's real clear-sightedness and power of judging when he chooses to judge for himself, instead of being guided by C—— and S—— and B——, deluding initials, which have wrought him meikle woe. When he is on more serious ground, and his mind is really called into action, the effect is very different. His chapter on the Universities is a fine piece of writing, and full of appreciation of these institutions, so novel and interesting to strangers. The Church—though he makes very curious remarks about it—fills him with respect on the whole. The music at the evening service in Westminster Abbey attracts his profound admiration. "Thus understood," he says, "worship is the opera of elevated, serious, and believing souls,"—but he means no offence by his use of that word. He admires the Liturgy, which is "imposing and impassioned, marked by much elevation and a certain Hebraic sublimity." The clergy interest him much; the clerical profession in England seems to him a career similar to that of the French magistracy. This resemblance evidently strikes him greatly, for he returns to it again and again, moved, as is very natural, by the extraordinary difference between the ordinary class of priests sprung from the people, to which he is accustomed, and the rank and importance of the Anglican clergy. He is very laudatory of our religious services, commending them in a way which would, however, find, we fear, but little favour in the eyes of religious people. Here is his view, the view of a French philosopher not professing any religion, upon the matter:—

"Whatever be the religion of a country, church is the place to which men come after six days of mechanical

toil to freshen in themselves the sentiment of the ideal. Such was the Grecian temple under Cymon—such the Gothic cathedral under St Louis. In accordance with the difference of sentiment, the ceremony and the edifice differ; but the important point is, that the sentiment should be revived and fortified. Now, in my opinion, that occurs here: a day-labourer, a mason, a sempstress, who leave this service, carry with them noble impressions suited to the instincts of their race—a vague notion of an august, I know not what, of a superior order, of invincible justice. Moreover, a cultivated man can seat himself beside them; he is not repelled by too base superstitions. No petty decorations, painted images, childish parade, posturings, set marches, and antiquated ceremonies whereof the congregation have forgotten the meaning. The walls are nearly bare; the hymns and words are in the vulgar tongue; the officiating clergyman does not make genuflections; his bearing is that of a magistrate; except the surplice he has the garb of one, and, according to the saying of Joseph de Maistre, he may be defined as a gentleman charged with holding forth worthy discourses to you. The ceremony is a moral gathering, where the chairman speaks in a pulpit, in place of speaking from a platform. Besides, in his discourses as in his worship, dogma is always put in the background; before everything else the act and will to live rightly are considered."

We doubt whether we have chosen wisely in presenting the reader with this curious picture of our national worship from a point of view so different from our own; but there is a certain quaint reality about it, and it is interesting as the genuine opinion of a non-Christian philosopher of the nineteenth century, ignoring the Christianity of the matter altogether, and judging the matter from a purely moral and social point of view. The strange, subtle, probably unconscious condescension and respectful patronage of this judgment is very noticeable; but perhaps the reader will be more satisfied, as a

specimen of M. Taine's powers of understanding the higher qualities of England, with the following description of a court of justice :—

"The reports of criminal trials must be perused in order to understand to what a degree the judge's part is dignified and honourably filled. Nor can there be detected in him any trace of the spirit of persecution, the sentiments of a policeman, the desire to inflict vengeance on behalf of society, the instincts of a hunter warmed by the chase and intent upon securing his prey. A passage which I translate says, 'that the principle of English law is, that a man must be held to be innocent till he is proved to be guilty: the burden of proof rests altogether upon the prosecution.' Contrary to the French rule, a prisoner may keep his mouth closed; he is not bound to incriminate himself; no officer of justice of whatever degree is entitled to extract his secret from him under any pretext whatever. Conformably to this rule of justice, when the judge pronounces sentence, he does so with the authority and with the impartiality of a mind thoroughly convinced. He neither declaims nor indulges in invective. He neither conceals the weak points of the evidence nor exaggerates the points beyond dispute. He weighs his words, translating his carefully formed opinion into clear language; and when he adds moral condemnation to the legal sentence, the gravity and nobleness of his tones are worthy of all praise. More than once I have thought that if Justice herself had a voice she would speak thus. The man himself is transformed into the simple organ of truth and rectitude. The prisoner at the bar cannot help bowing before such a power as this, and assenting to the justice of his sentence. I know no other spectacle which can as solemnly imprint in men's minds veneration for the law."

This very just and well-merited eulogy shows that M. Taine is capable of understanding and appreciating the profound difference between our social economy and that of his own country. But we cannot think that such a book as this will raise his reputation among his countrymen, and it will cer-

tainly do it essential damage in England. A man on whom Oxford lately bestowed her best honorary distinction should at least have concealed his ignorance, or what is still worse, his superficial acquaintance with the country which thus distinguished him. Ignorance is always pardonable, but pretended understanding is never so. No doubt many books making mistakes equally absurd, and containing conclusions equally rash and hasty, have been concocted in England on the subject of French customs and ways; and one such, the volume entitled '*Fair France*,' for instance, has been suggested to us as affording more than a balance to the foolishness of M. Taine. But then '*Fair France*' is professedly the work of a person knowing little of France, and giving her first impressions of a country which she, pardonably, thinks as little known to all the world as it is to herself; whereas M. Taine's lucubrations are given to us as the results of long and close observation made by a philosopher, who is pledged by that very name to examine all his grounds and prove them, before he gives forth his judgment. Maga has not to seek farther than her own pages for views of French society which show a very different power of understanding and appreciation. And the book which we have mentioned in conjunction with that of M. Taine—the essays of Mr Reeve—shows at once an enormous fundamental difference in the English and French way of treating the foreigner. To Mr Reeve, France is a great country thoroughly well known, with a history which his readers are acquainted with, a country whose politics even are known to us, and about which it is something like disgraceful to make any glaring mistake. Totally different is M. Taine's manner of approaching England. Many travellers, no doubt, before him have

made incursions into this barbarous island. Yet he feels that to his readers it is pretty much what an island in the South Seas might be. Upon the few meagre facts that are known about England he feels himself perfectly safe to generalise. He is an explorer more than an observer. He goes about with his notebook, gravely putting down the details of the savage life, according as they appear to him; confusing ideas, mixing up the habits of the bagman with those of the patrician, and gravely recording as characteristic indications of national life, the bewilderments which arise among the subjects of his commentary out of his own mistakes. We are afraid that, until England ceases to be a savage and unexplored country to the Frenchman, the same mistakes are likely to continue to happen: but they ought not to be propounded by the hand of a *savant*—a man who has had the honour of being proposed for the Academy, and who writes himself D.C.L. of Oxford. In such a connection they become doubly mischievous and absurd.

Out of these strange travesties of our own everyday life, it is amusing to find ourselves, all at once, in real savage lands, in islands of actual barbarians, so far off and so little known as almost to justify an explorer, if he be so minded, in evolving a great deal out of his own inner consciousness, certain that a long time, at least, must elapse before he can be found out. The Earl and the Doctor, however, who have thus communicated to us their views upon the South Sea Islands,* approach their subject in a much more genial spirit than that of the French philosopher. The book is not in the least a book to be recommended; it is a piece of rollicking youthfulness, fast, "slangy," and indifferent to all rules of reason and

composition. But it cannot be denied that it is very amusing. The pictures are as bright as youth and high spirits and a certain friendly impartiality in respect to morals and manners in savage lands can make them. The shining and glowing sea, bluer than the Mediterranean—the great coral-reefs with "rollers" breaking over them—the lovely flowery islands with their mountains and picturesque rocks—the merry mob of singing, dancing, smiling, improper islanders, men and women,—are all set before us with a reality, and, at the same time, a levity which will provoke the gravest reader into a smile—all the more when he reflects how different have been all his previous opportunities of making acquaintance with them. The story of the Earl and the Doctor is decidedly the farthest remove possible from a missionary report; and though it is easy to imagine how these simple yet subtle islanders, overflowing with natural amiability, should have furnished the most delightful roll of easy conversions, yet it is almost impossible to doubt that the account of them from the other side of the question, presented to us in this free-and-easy way, is more reliable than many graver narratives. Our present travellers began at Tahiti; and when we think of the very grave questions that were nearly arising at one time on the subject of the French protectorate, and the royal rights of Queen Pomare, that past commotion looks extremely like a farce in the light of this picture of the genial Tahitians and their ways. The yacht and its masters afterwards explored all the Society Islands, and several others—each more beautiful, more bright, amiable, and gay than its predecessors—where they collected innumerable curiosities, the productions of the

* South Sea Bubbles. By the Earl and the Doctor. London: Bentley.

islands, rare specimens of birds, and a great many wonderful and delightful things—of all which, however, they were deprived by their shipwreck, which happened on a coral-reef near one of the smaller islands of the Fiji group in the month of October 1870. A more uncomfortable shipwreck surely never was. It rained incessantly, soaking the clothes, beds, and food of the unfortunate travellers, and they were kept in perpetual terror of an incursion by cannibal savages, who might have been tempted to make an entire end of them had they become aware of their misfortunes. The account of this shipwreck is as amusing as the rest of the book, though disfigured by a good deal of foolish youthful banter by way of proving the absence of heroism in the heroes of the achievement—an assertion which, begging Lord P——'s pardon, it is very evident he neither believes in himself nor wishes us to believe in. However, even here many of his remarks are good. The "sulky irritation at being turned out of my warm bed into the cold water," which mingled with the awe of the situation during the miserable night which he spent on the coral-reef, expecting to be dashed to pieces every moment—the curious faculty of becoming accustomed to the worst position which shows itself whenever men are in circumstances of imminent danger—the weariness and monotony which tell more than danger itself,—are all very well indicated. The reader enters with sympathy into the perfectly unadorned story, which would be simpler and pleasanter, however, were all the professions of want of adornment cut out; and is amused by the Doctor, who catches nothing but a wetting when he goes to fish; and by the Earl, who finds that "sleeping on the top of an aneroid, two revolvers, a pair of boots, and a cigar-box, is not the most comfortable way of passing the

night." The comfort they experience when, after shyly coasting along the dangerous but beautiful shore, which they believed to be inhabited by cannibals, and being almost tempted to land by the sight of "a house which had a missionaryish look about it," they at last find a big ship lying at anchor, and getting safely into it, "hear the pouring rain, knowing it could not get at" them—is thoroughly comprehensible, and gives a pleasant conclusion to the tale.

The forte of the Earl and the Doctor, however, is descriptive, not philosophical; and a great many of their remarks (though, by the by, it is the former only who expands on this subject) upon religion are simply impertinent—more like the foolish talk of a youth who has been, perhaps, unduly worried in his upbringing by religious discussions, than of a man competent to give an opinion. "Metaphysical theology is to me much as Charles the First was to poor Mr Dick in his memorial," our young critic admits, with much more truth than he intends; for certainly his theology is very wild and confusing stuff, and has a way of lumbering into his best bits of nonsense, and spoiling them, which makes it very clear that it is worth an effort for him to get rid of the ghost which thus haunts him. Notwithstanding this imperfection, there are gleams of observation and good sense in the chapter on Missionaries. This most perplexing subject, which it is so difficult to come to any clear decision upon, is certainly far from being settled by such jaunty criticism; but nothing can more truly define the superficial character of the "work," which so many good people fondly believe to have been carried on in those beautiful islands, than the sketch of their manners and morals afforded us in this book. To the Earl the utter absence of any conception of pure living in the

minds of his brown friends seems, though astounding, a natural peculiarity. We must remember, he tells us good-humouredly, that "with the law came sin," and that where law has no existence, and where there is no sense of degradation, possibly there is no vice; and it is "a question to be considered whether 'sin' is a term to apply equally all over the world, or whether it is something relative to surrounding circumstances." It cannot be expected, however, that this would ever be a view of the matter likely to commend itself to a missionary, and the peculiar habits of the people may well strew the path of these evangelists with thorns. The Earl affords us rather a ludicrous picture of these same light-minded and improper natives at church taking notes of the sermon with every appearance of seriousness; though the moment the missionary is out of sight they are found quite ready for a very different kind of diversion. Here is one of these comical little sketches of religious life in Raiatea:—

"The Doctor and I went ashore to church. It was a very pretty sight to see them all in their best clothes, neat little hats, and fresh flowers. They didn't seem to care much about the sermon except the hymns, whispering little jokes to each other, and laughing or telegraphing with their eyes. A good part of the congregation kept outside the doors, looking in occasionally to see how things were going on. The sermon was in the native language; and Queen Pomare's mamma, after taking a note or two on a piece of foolscap paper, with great gravity curled herself up on a bench, and went fast asleep, as did also the missionary's dog, which I considered wrong, and rather too cool in an animal of his associations, so trod on his tail to wake him up."

In another church the scene is still more characteristic. There were benches, but most of "the female population" (*N.B.* It is perhaps natural, but it is curious, that our young travellers should tell us so

much more about the female population than about the other part of the community) "preferred lounging about on the mat-covered floor. The babies were charming, jolly, merry little brown things, who crawled about, playing and crowing without a squall in a ton of them. The elderly women all began to take short notes of the sermon with pencil and paper, as we used to do at school."

From this quaint church-going, we pass to a "school inspection" equally quaint. This time it is the Doctor who speaks.

"At ten o'clock in the morning we made ourselves tidy to go to a school inspection, and with the recollection of similar inflictions at home, pulled ashore in a very low state of mind. School inspection! it was a *fête* or bacchanaliad. On the very beach we were received by a torrent of muslin, smiles, and laughter, which swept us into the schoolroom—a large open, cool, well-planned building—with all manner of kindly greetings. As they all settled down we found there were three classes of scholars—girls, boys, and grown women—all got up in their best clothes to do us honour; and not only that, but crowned one and all with the most beautiful and tasteful wreaths it has ever been our fortune to see. There was not one single wreath round the forehead or neck of a girl or boy which was not admirable in the judgment with which the flowers were selected and arranged; and the scent! Orange-flowers being used in profusion, 'twas as a bridal.' They had been employed since early dawn in gathering and arranging them. It is not always that this flower-wreath-wearing is permitted in school. They may wear them to the door, but must leave them outside. The naughty little dears have invented a flower language for themselves, and make love under 'teacher's' very nose without a word or glance passing. . . . Then" (we change to another account of a similar performance), "we had some singing. Everything has to be altered to suit the temperament of these people: the multiplication-table, always connected in my mind with a fusty Colenso or a

slate, was here a dance and song combined; the alphabet was sung to the tune of 'Auld Langsyne'—one hymn to that of the 'Jolly Dogs' nativised, and another to that of 'Oh, Susannah, don't you cry for me!' Then a gang of them began quietly to perform a little dance, Mr V. consenting to wink at it. Two little imps of girls came out of the mob, wriggled their bodies and waved their little arms after the approved fashion, while the rest of the girls formed round them and sang. It was very amusing to see the way they all dried up whenever Mr V. looked over his shoulder, though occasionally they became so inspired by the performance, as to require a gentle tap on the head with an umbrella to call them to order."

These dances, one of which Mr V. consented to wink at, are of a highly indecorous character, we are told, but are as well known now, though practised chiefly in secret, as they were before missionaries were known—not a very encouraging fact for the teachers. The missionaries, however, we are bound to add, though our travellers in the abstract have but a poor opinion of them, show very pleasantly through their wanderings, opening every now and then a pleasant semi-European home to the Earl and his companion, and filling a very important position everywhere. To live in those lovely, lively, sunshiny islands—to have everything you want except society, and sometimes an unexpected windfall of that—to be as princes among a good-natured people, even though you have to put up with their kittenish nature incapable of serious impressions—is not a very hard fate; and so long as the missionary likes to do it, and the London Missionary Society likes to send him, the question is easy enough to settle; but when it comes to martyrdom, and when a noble and worthy life, like that of Bishop Pattison for instance, is thrown away for the very doubtful advantage of a race which partakes

more of the tigerish than of the kittenish nature, then the ground is shifted, and the problem becomes a very painful one. The burning of villages may be good enough by way of reprisals, but we doubt whether any martyr would choose that way of making his blood effectual; and indeed we cannot but doubt profoundly whether all the Fijis together were worth to the English race the sacrifice of that stout-hearted and serviceable man.

We add a description—one of the very best in the book—by the Earl, of the first entrance of the travellers into Papiete, the capital of Tahiti, which is fresh and full of colour as a picture, and conveys to the reader something of the delightful sense of novelty which was evidently in the writer's mind.

"I can never forget the scene that burst upon my astonished and half-opened eyes as I turned out of bed one morning and found myself entering the port of Papiete. Great mountains, of every shade of blue, pink, grey, and purple, and broken into every conceivable fantastic shape, with deep, dark, mysterious gorges showing almost black by contrast with the surrounding brightness, precipitous peaks and pinnacles rising one above the other like giant sentinels, until they were lost in the heavy masses of cloud they had impaled; while below, stretching from the base of the mountains to the shore, a forest of tropical trees, with the huts and houses of the town peeping out between them.

"The fairest islands of the West Indies idealised, with a dash of Ceylon, is all I can compare it to. And the natives! how well they match the scene! The women, with their voluptuous figures, their unique, free, graceful walk—their night-gowns (for their dress is nothing but a long chemise, white, pale green, red, or red and white, according to the taste of the wearer, which is invariably good) floating loosely about in a cool, refreshing manner—their luxuriant tresses crowned with a carefully-plaited Araroot chaplet, and further surmounted by a great flowing bunch of 'Reva-reva'—their

delicious perfume of cocoa-nut oil (it is worth going to Tahiti for the smell alone), and, above all, their smiling handsome faces and singing bubbling voices, full of soft cadences,—all this set off by the broken scattered rays of green light shining through the shady avenues. Oh that I were the artist that could paint it! What pleasant places those avenues are for a stroll in the evening, when the heat of the sun is beginning to die away! To meet the great, strapping, pleasant-looking men, in their clean white shirts and party-coloured waist-cloths, each greeting you, especially if you are English, with a ready smile and a hearty ‘*Ya rana!*’—which means all kinds of salutations and blessings—sometimes even, if they like the look of you, stopping to shake hands, with no earthly object but kindly good-fellowship. I have seen even small piccaninnies stop in their infantile gambols, and toddling up, with their little faces puckered into dimples and their little puds held up to reach your fingers, pipe out a shrill ‘*How do you do?*’ And as for the young ladies! the most bashful and coy will never pass you without a greeting, a glance of the eyes, and a slight gathering in of her dress with her elbows to exhibit her buxom figure to full perfection. Or else perhaps she will come up coquettishly and ask you for the loan of your cigar, take a few puffs at it, and hand it back gracefully to the rather astonished owner, and then, with a parting compliment which you most likely don’t understand, let you go your way in peace.”

We feel that there is something absurd in the association which makes us think of the sermons of the Rev. Stopford Brooke, and some few other preachers of the same class, when we take up Mr Shand’s novel.* Sermons and novels are, or are supposed to be, things for feminine consumption chiefly; and the same consciousness of distinct intellectual effort in a new channel, conveyed in the praise which we have heard given with great respect, and even awe, to some clergymen—that they preach for

men—recurs naturally to the mind after reading a novel which may also be supposed to be for men in the midst of the frivolous productions which are good enough for womankind. ‘*Shooting the Rapids*’ is of this class. There is a solidity and conscientiousness about the writing, a gravity in the circumstances, an altogether imposing character about the book, which suggests to us instinctively the effort of an intellectual man to save from degradation a branch of literature which is fast going, if not to the dogs, yet to the women. Mr Shand has made an effort to stem this tide. He has put away feminine things from his course as far as that is possible in a tale which has its due intermixture of love-passages, and instead of depicting to us the frivolous shilly-shallyings of a boy or girl as to which of two people he or she shall marry, has made the graver events of a man’s career, temptations unconnected for once with women, and affecting other organs than the heart, the principal points of his story. In some ways this is a decided gain. It is a novelty, a break upon the monotonous reproduction of those vicissitudes of love-making, which, by this time, we know as well as our A B C; and heaven knows the terrible delirium of the struggle for money is often more exciting than the hottest fires of passion, or any individual sentiment of which the mind is capable. The only doubt upon our mind is whether it can be made as interesting to the world in general. There are enough of us, it is true, who know all about the heats and chills of poverty, its devouring anxieties, and the brief elation which accompanies a sudden windfall, to make a sufficient audience for any writer; but even with this special audience, it is doubtful

* *Shooting the Rapids.* By Alexander Innes Shand. Smith, Elder, & Co. 1872.

whether the care-worn soul might not prefer, on the whole, to be solaced with a sentimental misery, for which he could shed a disinterested tear, smiling secretly the while, than to endure his anxieties over again, and wince and tremble at every letter which is received by the hero, as much as if they were bills or "calls" of his own. But it is worth while making the experiment; and it would be difficult to make it in a better spirit, or with more talent and care, than is shown by Mr Shand. The story of Ralph Dacre is full of highly wrought situations, and a great deal of interest. He is introduced to the reader in a very stirring scene during the siege of Rome in 1849, when he is very nearly sacrificed as a spy to the distrust of the people, and very nearly killed afterwards on the ramparts saving their flag in a French attack. On emerging from this brief madness, however, the hero appears in a situation very different from anything suggested by vague fighting for a revolutionary cause. He wakes up to find himself in the most painful position that can well be imagined; a rich man in appearance, supposed to be the possessor of a great estate in England, and another in Germany, while in reality penniless, with scarcely enough money to pay the interest on the mortgages, which swallow both properties up. He is not brave enough to allow the world to know his real position; and with the reputation of a rich man, goes into society, and, notwithstanding all the prudence of his living, gets dragged into debt. Very soon he is surrounded by temptations, and the frightful necessity of securing money at any price leads him first into the betrayal of State secrets—which he knows as Secretary to the Foreign Minister, and afterwards to all kinds of disreputable transactions following upon this one. Mr Shand,

with great art and skill, manages all those unpardonable offences so that we never lose our interest in Ralph; and this is the great success of the book. But we confess that we find it very hard to believe that such a man as he is depicted could ever have so betrayed his trust. The other backslidings are comprehensible, but this is scarcely comprehensible; and to place it at the very beginning of his career, is, we think, a fundamental mistake. The incident of the race strikes us, too, as a mistake; for in all Ralph's previous character there is nothing which would lead us to believe that he could stake his last die upon the chances of a race-horse; but his total collapse was, of course, necessary, and is both in life and in books inevitable, howsoever it comes. The gradual gathering of the darkness round him, its occasional breaks and sudden lightings up, the frantic hopes that contest the ground with it up to the very last moment, and then the sudden irremediable despair and overthrow, are all very well and powerfully set before us.

The interest of the book, however, centres entirely in Ralph. Though the country-house at Barham is a very pleasant picture, the love-making carried on there is a little heavy and prosaic. It is the kind of love-making which used to be in books many years ago, before Mr Trollope arose to make love individual, or writers in general had begun to learn that no two men proposed alike, any more than they fought alike or wrote alike—a great modern discovery, to which Mr Shand has paid too little attention. His gallant lover and his pretty heiress are not very individual, and do not secure our interest; but Ralph's fortunes are always interesting, and we truly sympathise with his adventurous friend, Hardcastle, when he cries out with a kind of indignation at Providence,

"Poor Dacre, what infernal luck!" on hearing that, after Ralph's ruin, his poor mortgaged property had developed immense mineral wealth. This is a fault in the book which, however justified by considerations of art, will probably detract from its general popularity more than anything else. The unhappy Ralph has certainly "infernal luck." He has as many knock-down blows as would kill a dozen ordinary men. He is never allowed to forget his skeleton; and the wretches who work his ruin, and who, the moment he is ruined, turn out such very poor and helpless creatures, oppress our very souls with their successful impositions, as long as there is anything to be got out of him. But with these defects, 'Shooting the Rapids' is a remarkable novel. It is full of excellent writing, and much mental analysis, which is very close and powerful. The reader cannot dart through it for the mere story, though the story is interesting, and keeps its hold upon him. In short, it is something like the beginning of a new school of works, intended to embody a different kind of interest from that which has been paramount for the last twenty years at least. Poetic genius is not likely, we fear, to reveal itself in this channel; but there is no reason why intellectual ability and talent, qualities which make themselves felt in all spheres, should not take up this branch of art as well as another. There is as much to be taught, and as true service to be done, we do not doubt, by the development of fictitious characters as by the description of real ones; and it will be very well if such books as Mr Shand's set the example, and bring into the sphere of fiction a new and more serious kind of power.

To pursue this distinction further,

there are several novels recently published which we might classify with Mr Shand's. In old days, within our recollection, works which were specially suitable for women used to be indicated by their titles in the publishing lists. Now literary currents have set in so whimsically, that it is quite time there should be a Series for Men. In this series Mr George Meredith's wild, half-mad, and wholly clever performance, 'The Adventures of Harry Richmond,'* will probably find a place. The first part of this book, treating of the boyish adventures of its hero and his friends, is charming, full of easy power and delightful absurdity. The baby portion is a perfect childish idyl, and nothing can be finer than the picture of Harry's extraordinary and captivating father as he appears to his child. But the luxuriance of unrestrained imagination runs riot to such an extent that it is very difficult to trace out the meaning of the latter part, or not to believe that all the personages have gone mad together. The imbroglia of German princes and princesses, the daring deeds of that Minerva-Diana who in English is called Janet, and the ineffable absurdities of Harry's father, who thinks himself a royal duke, and behaves as such, run all to seed at the end, and produce such a thicket of incidents and emotions, as it is very difficult for the reader to force his way through. But this thicket is everywhere bright with strange bits of description, with gleams of insight and quaint clever sayings, such as afford a pleasant clue to the reader, by means of which he can guide himself out and in of the labyrinth. It is not a novel in the legitimate three-volume sense of the word, but it is a very odd and very clever book.

* The Adventures of Harry Richmond. By George Meredith. Smith, Elder, & Co.

And we might add to the same series Mr Lever's last novel, '*Lord Kilgobbin*,'* in which all the vigour and brilliant vitality which have done so much to amuse us for—how many years? are to be found in full force, as expansive, as animated, as full of variety and power as ever. Nobody but Mr Lever sets before us those Irish interiors, poor but lavish, where visitors come and go as in a panorama, where every kind of unexpected person turns up, and where politics and morals and love-making are all discussed together. Lord Kilgobbin himself, who is, if you please, only Mr Kearney, with all his shrewdness and singularity, his pride and his modesty, is as pleasant an acquaintance as one could make in a summer day. And nothing could be better than his meeting with his natural enemy and brother, the Tory and Protestant squire, whom he finds to be so very far from a bad fellow, and towards whom his heart yearns as they walk together solemnly to show themselves to the gaping admiring people like two emperors reconciled. We do not know so well what to say of the lovely and "insolent" Greek who turns all the men's heads, and has her own turned at last in so curiously unexpected yet characteristic a way; but she is Mr Lever's child every inch of her; and so is the admirable Kate, and all the surrounding figures in the wild fresh Irish landscape, which never gets hackneyed, though perhaps some of its inhabitants occasionally do. The clever scamp Joe Atlee, and the languid diplomatist Cecil Walpole, are both personages whom we have met before, but they are quite

worth meeting again. They are both failures in their very cleverness, in their utter selfishness and self-seeking; and the sudden expedient by which Mr Lever discomfits both of them, and carries off the brilliant Nina out of the very arms of the polite official, is delightful in its poetic justice and startling unexpectedness.

These books are innovations upon the ordinary and traditional novel, and for that very reason are to be warmly welcomed. When all is done, the sentimental story will still keep its ground. It is the perennial, the everlasting, whatever temporary fashion may arise, or whatever attempts be made to give weight and seriousness to fiction. After all, it is only a small portion of us who have been or will be on 'Change or in politics, or able in any way to affect the funds, or to make or mar other people's fortunes; but all of us have been, are, or are going to be, in love. And this one particular gives to all the varieties of romantic and sentimental fiction an immeasurable advantage against which no other power can stand. Yet we greatly recommend and advocate the formation of a series of novels adapted for men. It will give us that variety in the field of fiction which is so desirable everywhere. It will bring out the dramatic interest of many a situation of modern life which at present is seldom considered; and—there is no saying—may do good to the class for whom it is intended. If it affects them, according to the irreverent simile we have already hazarded, like Mr Stopford Brooke's sermons, what more is there to be desired?

* *Lord Kilgobbin*. By Charles Lever. Smith, Elder, & Co.

THE DOWNWARD COURSE.

A RETROSPECT of the different Liberal agitations which this country has experienced during the past century must convince a thinking man that, however plausible may have been the reasoning which was put before the people, however irresistibly the conclusions may have been deduced from the premisses, there was, underlying the whole arguments, a fallacy. This fallacy probably never presented itself to either demagogues or hearers in times past; but we trust that the events which are now passing may bring about some recognition of it in all quarters. It is this: That to the attainment of the very highest results in politics and government, nothing is required but a hearty will to do well in those who are intrusted with the powers of the State. The simplest possible deduction from it is, that wherever the results have been imperfect or unfortunate the governors have been negligent or corrupt, or at the least incapable. With this belief present in men's minds, though perhaps it may not have been expressed in words, it has always been easy enough to draw down censure upon Governments. When, for instance, Mr Bright asserts, as he often has done, that all the Ministers and all the powerful classes that ever were before him were corrupt, he must mean that these persons did not attain to that perfection which they would certainly have reached had they been honestly inclined. Of course there is here profound ignorance of the difficulties which the best and ablest governors have to encounter, profound ignorance of human nature, profound ignorance of the slow and small steps by which alone improvement is secured, if it

be secured at all. Ignorance, we know, is the parent of presumption; and therefore it is not wonderful if they who are so hard upon rulers themselves gladly undertake to rule, and to show the world what honest conscientious government is. But as ignorance and presumption are not the very best qualifications, it is no marvel if Governments so undertaken break down more signally than those which have been stigmatised as corrupt.

We believe that we do no injustice to the Gladstone Administration if we say that it took office intending to convict all preceding Governments of unrighteousness, and to demonstrate how easily and successfully affairs of State can be conducted by thoroughly upright statesmen who give their whole hearts to their work. This was a rash and dangerous challenge to opinion. The Gladstone Government was bound either to do far better than any of the so-called corrupt Governments of the past, or, by its own doctrine, to incur, in common with them, the reproach of being wilfully unjust, and therefore necessarily unsuccessful. Everybody knows what the result has been. Everybody knows that, instead of being an example of the highest class of governors, our present Ministers, whether judged by their acts or the consequences of their acts, have less claim to admiration or approbation than any that this century has known. Tried by their own rules, how can Ministers escape condemnation? The dangers and perplexities into which they have steered the country are apparent: we need not enumerate these sad results of their administration. But, more than this, the very means used, the acts

of Government, have been more questionable, and have caused more scandal than is common with ordinary unpretending Governments. What shall we say, for instance, of the violation of the Constitution—the overriding of the Legislature by an act of prerogative? What shall we say of the many and notorious evasions of the laws? How would Mr Gladstone or his colleagues have denounced such things if they had been done by statesmen of another party? And then in regard to the exercise of patronage, always pointed at by the Radical party as a point on which a great and virtuous example was wanted, there seems to have been no sort of improvement while we have been under a Government of great professions. There has been no scruple about promoting the undeserving—nay, there has been a readiness to promote persons who have deserved censure. Take for examples Beales, M.A., and the Marquis of Ripon! We have had disasters, mismanagement, and have certainly come no nearer to great success in government than we came under those who, by comparison with Mr Gladstone and his colleagues, are publicans and sinners. If this failure affected none but its authors, the world might say they merited their fate, and so leave the matter. But unfortunately other interests have been damaged; the country has suffered grievously, and the enemies of virtue have occasion to blaspheme, now that they see what a poor achievement a professedly virtuous Government can attain to. It would be only meting to him again such measure as he has meted to others, if we were to ascribe Mr Gladstone's many failures to wilful error; but we have no wish even by way of retort to be unduly hard. Morally considered, the present Government is probably neither

better nor worse than others that we have known. Conceit, inexperience, and incapacity have been its disqualifications, and its pharisaical condemnation of the motives of others has recoiled upon itself. It soon became acquainted with the difficulties of government, and being ignorant of practice, and provided only with inapplicable theories, it has been driven to all manner of pitiful shifts. Ministers may know well enough that these shifts were not things of choice, but of cruel necessity, which they would have avoided if they could; but they must know also that they would not allow necessity or anything else to be an excuse for the people whom they stigmatise. It may appear hard to the baffled regenerators that in all their trouble the world is so ready to note their defects, while it has not a thought to waste on their excellent intentions, or their great devotion to high principle. But there are many excuses to be made for the world. In the first place, the world remembers very well that Mr Gladstone was not called to the helm in any exigency of the country. Had he been so, it is probable that great allowance would have been made for him. But, on the contrary, at a time when the State was being managed quietly and well, he with great and glozing promises called upon the people to let him govern. There was thus a sort of bargain of which the world thinks that Mr Gladstone has not fulfilled his part. Secondly, there is a very large portion of the people whose ideas of government, and indeed of political morality, Mr Gladstone's Government was intended to condemn; he cannot expect much mercy from this portion. And again, there are many who, once Mr Gladstone's sincere admirers, are offended, not so much by his failures as by the very strange

means which he uses, by the very strange persons and the very strange sentiments that he allies himself with, by his mysterious utterances, and by the impression which he contrives to convey, that under his rule no institution and no interest is safe from disturbance. Above all, there is a lively recollection all over the country that Mr Gladstone is a turncoat, that he has found it convenient to repudiate those principles of which he was once the uncompromising advocate: and he must remember that those who have deserted from their colours are always watched more jealously than consistent partisans. These things considered, it is not to be expected that the world should condone so many mistakes and failures, simply because they were committed by persons who intended well. Besides, there are a great many of us who doubt whether Mr Gladstone's Government has been superior, even in intention, to Governments that went before it. It made, no doubt, greater profession of good intention than any other; but it is very probable that Governments of more modest profession may have had quite as high a regard for the public weal as our rulers of to-day; only that, knowing how many are the powers that fight against improvement, and how slow real advancement must necessarily be, they were not foolhardy enough to promise a golden age. They know that the best intentions, however skilfully carried into act, require patience, time, and fortune to make them fructify. But the element of caution seems to be altogether wanting in the Gladstone Ministry, which rushes directly towards its ends even when certain by so doing to defeat them. Trusting in its intentions alone, and innocent of experience, and of the simplest maxims of government,

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devoid of the least ability to rule a nation or to cement a party, there it stands, one of the most helpless and pitiable disappointments which the country has ever seen. Mr Gladstone, whatever else he may know, certainly knows not how to govern the British Empire.

As a proof of how little benefit the Ministry derive from warnings, May was not a week old when a defeat was announced just as damaging as any of those of the preceding month. A Scotch Education Bill had been framed to suit the supposed ideas of a majority of the House of Commons, but entirely regardless of the ideas and wishes of the Scotch people, whom alone the measure was to affect. Now any intelligent person who has ever visited Scotland, or who has ever studied Scotch people in any part of the earth, must know well that to offer them a system of education in which religious instruction is not expressly provided is to insult them, and to set before them, instead of bread, that which they consider to be no better than a stone. And yet, notwithstanding this well-known truth, and notwithstanding the strong expression of feeling made by Scotchmen, Ministers persisted in denying to them a clear unequivocal declaration, embodied in the Bill, to the effect that instruction in the Holy Scriptures ought to be provided in all schools as an essential part of education. The consequence was that the Ministry was defeated, and compelled to accept a declaration in favour of Scriptural teaching; and Mr Gladstone and his colleagues are probably to this hour fretting themselves to discover what malignant influence it is which has been again able to thwart the will of the best and most virtuous Government that ever existed! We learn from the speech of Mr Gordon, who introduced the amend-

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ment, that last year 70,000 Scotch petitioners objected to the Bill as framed by Government, while this year more than 200,000 Scotch have petitioned against it—a very large number, when it is remembered that Scotland has but one-sixth of the population of England. We learn, moreover, that—

“In Edinburgh, a meeting, presided over by a nobleman much respected wherever he was known—the Duke of Buccleuch—and attended by many other influential persons, lately protested against the Bill, and especially against its destructive tendency as regarded religious instruction. In that discussion part had been taken by men of all Churches—the Established Church, the Free Church, the Episcopalians, and even many belonging to the United Presbyterians. He meant the laity of the latter body, because he admitted that there was not the same feeling among the clergy of that denomination. All the teachers connected with the parish and other schools in Scotland had expressed in the strongest manner their dissatisfaction with the provisions of the Bill, and in particular with its provisions relating to religious instruction, feeling that they would hamper them in the proper discharge of their duty, and holding it to be essential that the teacher should have power to give religious instruction.”

Sir J. Elphinstone probably gave voice to the feeling general in Scotland when, speaking of the Government measure, he said :—

“He regarded that as a godless and an infidel Bill; because, if it did not entirely exclude religious teaching from its provisions, it made that teaching depend upon the whim or caprice of an ignorant school board, who might be acted upon by various causes, and in whose hands, therefore, the education of the country could not be safely placed. He was himself educated at the parish school of Musselburgh, and could state that religion was the foundation, and pervaded every part of the instruction given there. The various bodies of Presbyterians in Scotland were all

agreed in the main points of their creed, and all held that Holy Scripture and the Shorter Catechism, the production of the greatest Protestant divines, were the basis of education. This measure, therefore, was most distasteful to the people of Scotland, who ought to know who were the men who voted with the Government upon it.”

Mr Greene characterised the measure as a question of the Prime Minister *versus* Scotland; and he seemed to make certain that those Scotch members who supported the Government therein would have no chance of re-election; while Mr Wheelhouse said that this Bill announced to the people of Scotland for the first time that the Government cared nothing whatever about religion! Now we should be very sorry to think that the Government cares nothing whatever about religion. We are bound to think that it cares a great deal about religion, only we fear that it cares a great deal more about the success of its measures. It threw over religion in the hope to win thereby, and so contrived to lose, demonstrating not only how far before religion it places party gains, but showing also that it doesn't know how to play the unworthy game which it attempted. It declined the service of God, and lacked the wit to serve Mammon. By adhering to the cause of religion it might have recovered some little strength, avoided what would appear likely to be a mortal offence to the Scotch people, and escaped a signal defeat in the House of Commons. It may possibly have been in the minds of the Government party that the Scotch members had in 1869 made no scruple of assisting to destroy a Protestant Church, in order that Mr Gladstone might do an act that should be acceptable to the Roman Catholics; and it may have been argued therefrom that the same Scotch members were indifferent to

the cause of religion, and so would take the Education Bill as the Government might choose to put it before them. If this was the Ministers' ground for the course they took, they stand convicted of the greatest want of discernment. The destruction of the Irish Church did not touch the people of Scotland closely; it was a question more for the Scotch members to decide on, and many of them, to their shame, concurred in the sacrilege. But the quality of the education to be henceforth provided for the people in Scotland is a thing which does come home to the hearts of the nation; and the nation has taken up the question for itself, and made its voice heard independently of its representatives.

Blunders by the Government are rather the rule than the exceptions, and cannot surprise us. This particular blunder, however, has been of importance to the cause of religion, inasmuch as it gave rise to a battle, and a victory on the side of religious education. We rejoice to see that Scotland has secured for itself the inestimable privilege of religious teaching; and we trust that what it has gained for itself it will insist upon for England and Wales, which in this respect require State aid more than Scotland does; for the fact of Scotland being so alive to the necessity of religious teaching shows that, with or without an Act of Parliament, she will take care to have it; while, if the State come not to the aid of England and Wales, it is likely that those who most want the knowledge of religion may never hear of religion at all, so indifferent or so hostile are large sections of the population of the kingdom and principality. Mr Gordon, who showed that he understood the situation though the Government did not, deserves the thanks of all religious men for his amend-

ment, and for the clever way in which he worked it to a successful conclusion. The Ministerial party evidently thought that they could defeat him; and they certainly would have hurried on a division at an hour unpropitious to the amendment, if Mr Gordon and his supporters had not kept the debate alive, and so baffled the Ministerial tactics. Perhaps this very victory may much hasten the time when Mr Gordon, once more in office, may have frequent opportunity of using his talents for the benefit of the country.

Only a day after the opinion of the House of Commons in favour of religious education for Scotland had been pronounced, there appeared in the advertisement sheet of the 'Times' a protest against the exclusion of the Bible by law from public elementary schools, made, as we understand, by members of the Dissenting bodies. It had already received, as the 'Times' in a leading article of the 10th May remarked, about a hundred and eighty signatures, among which were those of Mr Spurgeon, Mr Newman Hall, and Dr James, President of the Wesleyan Conference; also those of Mr Baines, Mr Charles Reed, and several other Nonconformist members of Parliament. It would thus appear that there is a difference of opinion among the Dissenters, and that godless education has not so many advocates as we feared that it had. This declaration is certainly of good omen, and, coupled with the victory in the House of Commons, ought to convince Ministers that adhesion to religious principles is not only the honest and upright course, but the best policy.

It would seem, then, to be the opinion of those who best understand the Scotch, that the godless Bill has incensed them greatly against Ministers. But this is not

the only quarter in which an angry feeling has been aroused. There is clearly a rod in pickle for them elsewhere, if we may rely on what was said by the 'Examiner' newspaper on 27th April :—

"The strategy that the Government has pursued during the last few days, with reference to Mr Fawcett's Dublin University Bill, may have been very clever, but it is certainly very discreditable. Mr Gladstone himself on Thursday most accurately described it, according to his speech in the 'Times,' as 'the miscarriage and misconduct of the Government.' Miscarriage it will doubtless prove when the day of vengeance comes. Misconduct it is already proved to be beyond dispute." There is, then, a vengeance hanging over the Administration on account of the Dublin University Bill; we have heard of a Non-conformist vengeance because of the part which Government took in regard to English education; there is certainly a storm ready to burst in recognition of the scandalous bungle, the American Treaty; and, upon the whole, this Government, which was to have been the delight and admiration of the whole country, would seem to have made itself in many quarters simply detestable.

Great as is the discredit which the Ministry has brought upon itself, and contemptible as is the condition into which it has fallen, one cannot but observe with gratification how little disposition the House of Commons has shown to press upon it factiously or rancorously. The business of destroying it is left pretty much to itself; and, to say truth, it seems quite equal to the task. When on the 7th May Sir Colman O'Loughlen proposed a vote of censure for a questionable appointment made to the office of Lord-Lieutenant of the county Clare, very little eagerness was shown to make the worst of

the case. After so many convictions of illegal appointments it would not have been extraordinary if Ministers' guilt in this matter had been assumed, and if a strong feeling had induced members to view the weak points of the case as indications of grave and culpable error. But, to the credit of the assembly, no disposition whatever was shown to proceed harshly. Although this was another accusation of an unqualified person being nominated to office with the understanding that the qualification should afterwards come to him, a distinction was immediately perceived between a qualification to be given for the express purpose, and only for the purpose, of obtaining the office, and a qualification to be given independently of the office, and which had been assured to the future recipient before any appointment to the office was in question. No trickery to produce a colourable qualification could be shown to have been practised, and, once this was apparent, the really damaging parts of the case were very lightly passed over. Putting aside all question of colourable qualification, it certainly seems a very extraordinary course, and one very hard to understand, to select for the office of Lord-Lieutenant of a county a gentleman non-resident, not possessed of an acre of land therein, and wholly unacquainted with the inhabitants over whom he was to exercise high authority. If this had been done by a more scrupulous Government, it would have probably seemed to Parliament to call for serious notice; but being an act of Mr Gladstone's Government, so great was the relief of finding that there had been no tampering with the law, that the minor improprieties were condoned at once. Even Mr Horsman forbore to discharge a shaft which he held ready fitted to his bow; and Mr B. Osborne found the occasion

convenient for some very amusing jokes, and for some quotations, one of which, from Sheridan, about "damned good-natured friends," shocked the august assembly, until Mr Osborne explained, or rather stated wrongly, the source from which it was cited. He told the House that the words are in the 'School for Scandal,' whereas they are in the 'Critic,' and used by Sir Fretful Plagiary.* On the whole, the Government escaped very well from this question, as habitual transgressors often do in cases where they are found to be less to blame than usual; and this leaning to mercy cannot, we think, be too much approved; for as the same offenders were expected ere long to come up for judgment on a most serious charge, it was well to give a proof of how little prejudiced or vindictive the tribunal is.

It now seems probable that a most impracticable and unnecessary Bill for secret voting may pass the House of Commons, and ultimately become law, as the Lords will scarcely think it their business to reject it, if it should be supported by a creditable majority in the other House. This Bill was introduced last year by the Government, no doubt under the mistaken idea that it would be very cordially received by the Liberal party, and so would be a source of strength to the Administration. But in this matter Government showed as much ignorance of public sentiment as they have shown in many others. This country is quite indifferent about the Ballot; and the Ministe-

rial party in the House of Commons evidently find it a most awkward subject to deal with, having no goodwill to it at all,† but feeling that their own consistency requires them to support what their party has for years asserted to be essential to the purity of election, and feeling also, perhaps, that the effect of the old traditional cry got up when the Ballot was unattainable, may yet be lively among their constituents. We would not have ventured to speak so decidedly (whatever we may have thought) on behalf of the Liberals, if we had not been strengthened in our opinion by their ally, the 'Times,' which states the case for us as distinctly as could be wished.

"Nobody," said the 'Times' on May 10th, "has any desire to see secret voting become the law of the land. Mr Forster has had to contend with the open opposition of nearly half the House of Commons, and the more dangerous secret dislike of half the remaining half. We are not so much surprised that he should have been defeated at times, and that at other times he should have accepted modifications of his Bill to escape defeat, as that he should have been able to carry it with so little change. . . . Seeing, then, that the adoption of secret voting is a decline from a higher to a lower standard of political morality—seeing that the conditions of social life among us which excuse it are at present less operative than they ever were before, and are rapidly passing away—we have never been able to look upon the Ministerial adoption of the Ballot Bill as anything more than an act of homage paid to an article of past faith which would soon have been discredited had they not adopted it;

* *"Sir Fretful Plagiary."*—To be sure; for if there is anything to one's praise, it is a foolish vanity to be gratified at it; and if it is abuse,—why, one is always sure to hear it from one damned good-natured friend or another!—"The Critic."

† "Talk not of means against intimidation,
And secret votes to womanise the nation;
Free men are those who, every threat defying,
Fight to the poll whilst cabbage-stalks are flying."

—Lord Lytton's 'St Stephen's.'

but we recognise frankly the consequences of this adoption. Large numbers of voters have been encouraged, and are now fixed, in the belief that they will be exposed to unknown evils if they have not the power of screening their votes in darkness; and legislation must take account of this state of feeling."

Thus the most that the 'Times' can find to say in favour of the Bill is, that it is a remedy for, not a real, but a fancied evil; for another, in fact, of those sentimental grievances for which the Government is so fond of legislating. There was a period when it was easy, and perhaps not uncommon, for influential men, or bodies of men, to sway the votes of electors, but it was at that time impossible for the advocates of secret voting to establish that system; but now that few can, and still fewer would, resort to bribery or intimidation—when, indeed, the danger of such malpractices is acknowledged to be infinitely small—we are to have our whole method of returning members to Parliament revolutionised,—and for what? In old times it sometimes happened, as we know, that the bodies of men who all their lives had been powerful enough to defy attack, and to make their will law, were, after they were dead and buried, dragged from their graves and exposed to insult, to gratify the vengeance of enemies who quailed before them while they lived. And these energetic proceedings against dead and buried bribery and intimidation are, it seems, to be orgies of similar kind. The great hearts who could not grapple with the evil while it was alive, are now going to enjoy a war-dance over its corpse. Is not all this pitiful? Does it not appear an absurdity, and worse than an absurdity, in these days when, by general admission, the session of Parliament is not long enough for the really necessary work of the country? If there is no real

grievance—if, as the 'Times' says, one half of the House of Commons openly opposes the Ballot, and half of the remainder secretly dislikes it—why on earth are we, who have so much real work to get through, disquieting ourselves about the matter? We see no reason whatever why the old system of open voting, which has not prevented the growth of our liberties and of our prosperity, should not be still continued, rather than that we should resort to a method of doubtful advantage, and the practical working of which is still more doubtful. The nominations, as at present conducted, might be surrendered; nearly everybody seems to think them out of date; and we have no wish whatever that Mr Osborne should ever again be compelled to vindicate the rights of the pure Liberal electors by means of canonically-dressed bruisers. The manner of nomination might be altered; but this is a very much simpler matter than introducing secret voting. By the way, when one looks back a little to ascertain what sort of evils they were which the Ballot is intended to cure, it is remarkable that in the election of 1859, the last occasion on which the immaculate Liberals thought fit to make a great outcry about corrupt practices, there were several scrutinies and some prosecutions, the result of which was to fasten convictions of bribery on several members, but on many more Liberals than Conservatives. Somebody very near to Mr Bright who talked so loudly and freely about corruption, had to stand in the dock; and we remember that we felt it our duty to comment on the different accusations, and to commend Liberal malpractices to the attention of our readers: so that the Liberal party legislating to cure such malpractices is like Satan reproving sin.

While the clauses of the useless and unwelcome Ballot Bill have-

been occupying the House of Commons, and working together with every other thing political, to the disrepute and weakening of the Ministry, another subject, now of first importance, has been put quite out of sight. There was haste enough shown in disorganising the Army—such haste that the Constitution must be overridden rather than that the change should be postponed; but now that reorganisation is indispensable, the consideration of it is put aside in order that a measure distasteful to three-fourths of the House of Commons may, like a nauseous retributive dose, be administered to the Liberal party, all of whom are bound, whatever inward revolt they may feel, to declare that it is the joy of their souls. From the manner in which Mr Cardwell introduced his Army scheme, one was induced to suppose that it was to be the great measure of the year. What has become of it? It is surely not a subject to be hurriedly dealt with at the session's end by a worn-out House, whose heart is in the Highlands, and not at Westminster. Mr Holms, by a question concerning the proposed loan for militia barracks, showed on the 10th May that everybody is not disposed to let the matter sleep. He got, however, only a vague answer from Sir H. Storks, to the effect that a Bill on the subject would be introduced as soon after the Whitsuntide recess as circumstances would permit; and at this answer the House laughed—amused either by its vagueness and insufficiency, or else tickled by the presumption of a Ministry over which the sword hung by a thread speculating on what it would do after three or four weeks. We think, however, that honourable members might with advantage do more than laugh over the Army Estimates. These Estimates, and matters in connection with them, will, we expect, demand a great deal of

time and thought, which should be given to them this session. It would be highly inexpedient for Parliament to separate for six months, leaving the Army in an unsettled state as at present.¹ The autumn may see us involved in some foreign complication, and with what face shall we speak with our enemy in the gate if our sword is in the outler's hands, being reset, and cannot be made fit to use for a twelvemonth? We should like very much to be resolved whether the promotions which Mr Cardwell proposes for the Artillery and Engineers are to be given this year or not; and we should like to know from what funds these promotions and the new Staff appointments are to be paid. As we pointed out last month, money is not provided for them in the Estimates under the proper heads; and to pay them out of any funds other than those voted for the pay of the Army would be most improper. We think, too, that the loan of three and a half millions will not be concurred in quite so easily as Ministers may hope. However cleverly the demand may be named and introduced, it will be really, if voted, a large addition to our military expenses, and the interest of it must increase Army expenditure for many years. It is difficult to understand why such expense as this is to be raised by loan, while the redemption of officers' commissions is to be effected by yearly votes. No information has yet been given as to the steps which may have been taken to value existing militia barracks, or to ascertain the expense of building new ones, or of providing drill-grounds. And yet the drill season, and the best season for building, are already slipping away. Army reorganisation is, in our opinion, of far more consequence than secret voting.

The Intoxicating Liquor (Licensing) Bill affords another proof of

the inability of Government to distinguish between the real needs of the country and the clamour of not very rational or discreet cliques. There is not, perhaps, one educated man in the kingdom who would not gladly, if he knew how, diminish the unfortunate propensity of our race, the degrading habit of drinking to excess. We are all pretty much agreed that it is a detriment and a reproach.

"This heavy-headed revel, east and west,
Makes us traduced, and taxed of other
nations ;

They clepe us drunkards, and with
swinish phrase

Soil our addition ; and indeed it takes
From our achievements, though performed at height,

The pith and marrow of our attributes."

But we are not all agreed that the evil is one to be put down by the strong hand ; on the contrary, the sense of the country would appear to be that intemperate habits should be combated by moral means. A noisy and enthusiastic section has, however, determined that it is the business of the State to make men keep sober ; and the Government, always foolishly sensitive to agitation, has mistaken this obstinate bleat for the voice of the nation, and proceeded accordingly to frame a repressive measure. It will be a strange thing if we succeed in making people who are inclined to drink temperate by Act of Parliament. It will be a strange thing if Parliament, after full consideration of the matter, decide to interfere. Not only is the advantage of legislation very doubtful ; every member who may vote for it is pretty sure to offend a powerful party among his constituents, and it is really unfair to urge men to such a course where there is so small a prospect of benefit. The makers and vendors of strong drink naturally resent the attempt of Government to restrict their business, at the instance of an Association not very numerous nor

of great influence. These tradesmen are collectively of some weight, and they have the means of swaying and of uniting large bodies of voters. They will offer great resistance, and, not improbably, defeat the Bill in the Lower House. "Well, and what then ?" we may be asked : "another Government Bill will be slaughtered, that's all ; and that need not distress you, as you don't support the Government." But it does distress us, nevertheless, to see the time of Parliament taken up with designs of doubtful utility while vital questions stand aside. The expected War Office measures are of a thousand times greater importance than this eccentric and mistaken legislation. The Alliance should have patience ; for time is likely to do more for its gratification than it can do for itself. The great hope for reform of the habits of the lower orders is derivable from the reform which has already obtained in the higher. The fashions and prejudices of the upper strata of society will inevitably find their way downward, but they require time to do so ; and the pace, we fancy, will not be materially affected by the benevolent blows and punctures of the excellent and well-meaning Association.

Turning to another announcement of the month of May, we cannot but pay a passing tribute to the patience, generosity, and loyalty of the Parliament of the Dominion, which, we read, defeated by a large majority a resolution condemning the withdrawal of the Fenian Raid Claims by Great Britain ; an amendment being adopted in its stead declaring it inexpedient to discuss the question in the present state of the relations between Canada and Great Britain. This, though very proper and highly honourable to Canada, is much more considerate and dignified behaviour than, we fear, we had a right to expect from our Dependency. The rights and

the honour of Canada have been shamefully sacrificed to purchase the assent of America to the wretched Treaty, and Canada has been insulted by a donation of hush-money, or our guarantee for money. If she had given vent to her feelings there would have been much to excuse her; as she has taken the better part there is the more to admire. And while speaking of the Dominion, let us congratulate her on the new Governor-General whose appointment has been announced. Lord Dufferin is, we believe, a nobleman in every way fitted for this high post. Enterprising, accomplished, of sound judgment, and of much literary ability, we doubt not that he will prove an able and successful ruler.

And now let us say a few words concerning the old galling subject, the American complication. What we have been permitted to know officially concerning it is not, we think, likely to change any opinion which the country has been led to entertain regarding the conduct and course of the negotiations. Putting the question of results for the present aside, and looking only at the means which have been used on our side, we must say that there is nothing in the Ministerial statements of the 13th May to convince the people that they have in any respect misjudged, or been unjust to, the Government. Everything done or left undone, has been apparently bunglingly done or altogether neglected, much in the manner and from the motives which have been from time to time imputed while the unfortunate tangle has been dragging its weary length along. Beyond the broad proposition that it is for the interest, as well as that it is the duty, both of America and England, to live in terms of amity, and to cease from the chronic sarcasms, bickerings, and recriminations in which they have been wont

to indulge—beyond this proposition, we say, we do not believe that the mind of the English Government and the mind of the English people have been at one since the commencement of negotiations. The Ministers have been playing a game of their own, and the people have been distrustful and most anxious. It was a most distressing truth, certainly, that two nations which could assist each other so materially as England and America could, and which, from the inheritance of common feelings and persuasions, and from the use of a common language, might have been expected to understand each other well, should have been induced to drag through nigh a century in a state of continued misunderstanding. We will not inquire now where the blame of this *quasi* hostility should be fastened; but we may safely say that in latter days England has supposed the bar to a good understanding to be the power possessed by the ignorant and uneducated classes in America to control opinion, and the facility with which designing short-sighted agitators could always excite the masses there to feelings of enmity against us. England, we are sure, has long deplored, and felt that it would be for her advantage to terminate, the inveterate disposition to carping and quarrelling, but she feared that she could never reach the mind of the solid, reflecting classes in the United States. Her acts and her words were seized upon and used for their own purposes by brawlers and local politicians, and shown to the people in the worst possible light, and with incitement to war and vengeance, until hostility to her became a settled feeling, and no profession was so likely to make a statesman popular as that of a desire to quarrel with Great Britain. The so-called Alabama Claims were latterly for ever

brought up when it was desired to raise a storm against us; and so convenient were they found at election times, or when a particular party aimed at ascendancy, that not the least desire was felt by agitators or popular assemblies to bring them to a settlement. On our side, we steadily refused, for some time after the termination of the war in America, to admit that we were in any way bound to give compensation for damage done by the *Alabama* or any other cruiser; but at length we saw reason to modify this refusal; and the mission of Mr Reverdy Johnson to England being thought to offer a favourable opportunity for negotiating (for Mr Johnson was superior to the irrational prejudices against us which had been so malignantly kept alive), a Treaty was agreed upon, having for its object the settlement of these Claims. But the Senate of the United States thought proper to disapprove this Treaty: it unfortunately fell to the ground, and Mr Johnson was recalled. At this epoch, as the present Lord Derby has more than once taken occasion to point out, Great Britain enjoyed a great advantage of situation. She had yielded the point which she at first so rigidly maintained, of not allowing any question of damages, and she had made a covenant with a view of having these damages fairly assessed. America it was who refused to ratify this Treaty after it had been approved by her own Government. Thus we could no longer be reproached with proudly shutting our ears to what the Americans chose to call their just demands; and indeed the *Alabama* Claims, as they now recalled the uncompromising spirit of their own Senate rather than that of the English Government, ceased to be a favourite handle for abusing us. Such was the state of this question when in an evil day the Gladstone

Government thought proper to stir it again. In the hands of that Government the conditions of the dispute underwent a wonderful revolution. America was no longer troubled to come and press her demand upon Great Britain: Great Britain, suppliant, and reckless of aught else so she might but compose this disagreement, went to America, entreating her to arrange to let us pay her, and to vouchsafe us a kind look in return for payment. America, who wanted our money, took the matter very coolly; England, whose money was to be paid, was ready to make apologies and to put her hand to anything, provided only that payment should be graciously accepted. A shallower policy, or a more undignified course than that which our Government pursued, it is impossible to conceive. The groans of the Britons wafted across the Atlantic, and never to be suppressed until the Americans should deign to kiss and be friends; a feeble Commission sent out like criminals to sue for pardon,—it is a marvel that they didn't appear with ropes round their necks, like the burghers of Calais before King Edward; regret expressed for what was not known to be a wrong when it was done; and a rule made after the event for the express purpose of making our innocent conduct appear unwarrantable!! There is no record of a nation voluntarily degrading itself in such a manner. As to John Bull, although he does not understand how much dirt he has been made to swallow, he is dimly conscious that, all of a sudden, he has been made to appear heart-broken for love of his not very responsive connection Jonathan, and he is greatly puzzled to account for this fit of affection. "If the rascal have not given me medicine to make me love him, I'll be hanged: it could

not be else: I have drunk medicines,"* he is saying; and well he may marvel, and ask himself what injury he ever did to his relative that required to be atoned for with such penitential concession, with such abject remorse. We grant that it would have been wrong to lose a proper opportunity of composing a great national difference for a mere punctilio. If the other party could not see the value and duty of compromise so plainly as we did, and would have risked the continuance of ill-will rather than make a conciliatory move, it might be quite right for us to make some concession beyond what strict justice demanded; but, in saying this, we do not mean that we were to lose sight of our own dignity and honour altogether. A man who makes an overture for the sake of peace without loss of self-respect, may increase his honour and his reputation by so doing; but he who licks the feet of his adversary in utter self-abasement is likely to get kicked for his pains.

But it was not only by the means employed to bring about the second Treaty that John Bull was aggrieved; the whole care of the Commission seems to have been to appease and propitiate the United States. *His* interest became an entirely secondary matter; and so disloyally or so carelessly† did the Commissioners allow the terms to be worded, that by them he was rendered liable to meet claims of greater amount than any indemnity ever paid by a conquered nation. Well, after a sea of slobbering, and after John Bull had been committed to the risk of having to pay the above stupendous

damages, besides to several other large concessions, and notably to the suppression of his own claims on account of the Fenian raids, America consented to sign the Treaty, whereupon the English Commissioners returned home in a sort of triumph, as men that had deserved well of their country. They were so received by our Government, and, for the enormous wrong that he had done us, Earl de Grey was made Marquis of Ripon! This perversion of honour we had, perhaps, best say little about, for Mr Gladstone is very wilful, and may act in the spirit of M. Jourdain, who, when Madame J. remonstrated with him on the impropriety of marrying their daughter to a marquis, said that if he were irritated about it he would make her a duchess;‡ and we might thus witness the further scandal of the Most Obtuse Marquis transformed into his Dulness the Duke.

As soon as the Treaty came before Parliament, it was seen to be a loose indefinite document, which placed no limit at all to the demands which might be made against us. Our Ministers, however, unhesitatingly assured us that no indirect claim could or would be brought forward under cover of it, and Parliament was obliged to be content. It was not long after this before the "Case" appeared, and then we learned the worthlessness of the assurance given by Ministers, and that the worst fears of those who had criticised the Treaty had been verified. It is unnecessary to repeat the items of these unparalleled Claims, because they are but too deeply imprinted on the minds of us all. And yet, astound-

* King Henry IV.

† *Vide* debates on opening Parliament 1872. The Commissioners were accused in the House of Commons of *crassa negligentia*, and their conduct spoken of as "infamous."

‡ "Ne me repiquez pas davantage; ma fille sera marquise en dépit de tout le monde; et, si vous me mettez en colère, je la ferai duchesse." — *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme*, scene xiii., act 3.

ing as the Claims were, no protest or answer of any kind was despatched for six weeks. With what object our Government thus procrastinated is not yet known, but we hope it will be ere long fully disclosed. The first pretence was that the printing of the document had taken so much time that it could not be in the hands of Ministers soon enough to admit of a reply being determined on till just before the meeting of Parliament; but the absurdity of so much time being required for printing was so apparent that that silly excuse was dropped. It is now pretended that the six weeks were necessarily expended in submitting the Case to Sir Roundell Palmer and the law officers of the Crown, and in obtaining their opinions thereon; and Sir Roundell Palmer has been brought forward, as he was in the "Collier scandal" matter, to make a defence of the Government; and he has made as bad a defence in this instance as he did in that, pointing out that it was thought better not to hurry, and that this accident and that accident had intervened to cause delay. Now it happens to be well known that when the outrage was committed of stopping the British mail-steamer *Trent* upon the high seas, and of seizing some of her passengers, three or four days sufficed for drawing up a case, submitting it to the law officers, obtaining their opinions, and deciding upon a course of action. But Lord Palmerston was Premier in those days, and Mr Gladstone is so in these days; so in the more recent case six weeks of precious time were lost. Three days before the meeting of Parliament, a document known as the "friendly communication," the terms of which have only very recently been published and communicated to Parliament, was despatched to America, and we waited many weeks for the answer, which, when it arrived, was found

to be an intimation that the Claims would be persisted in, and an invitation to state the grounds on which they were objected to. As Parliament showed some disposition to discuss this document, Ministers were as rapid now as they had before been dilatory; and an explanatory communication—a very long paper, as Lord Granville assures us—was prepared and despatched in seven days, proving that, when the object was to elude the action of Parliament, law officers and Cabinet Ministers could get over the ground wonderfully fast. With all their speed, however, there was reason to expect that the day by which we were bound to lodge our Counter-case would arrive before we should receive the rejoinder of the United States. If we should lodge the Counter-case, and the claims for consequential damages should not be withdrawn, there was danger that the arbitrators, being "seized" of the whole matter, might proceed to an award on possibly both indirect and direct claims; if we should lodge no Counter-case by the appointed day, the requirements of the Treaty would not be complied with, and it must be held either that England had withdrawn from the arbitration, or that she did not defend herself in the case. What our Ministers did was to lodge a Counter-case, accompanied by a separate note, by which all rights appertaining to her Majesty on this arbitration were reserved. The American Government, which was referred to, thought we might without in any way prejudicing our case so proceed; but it remains to be seen, in case grave decisions should turn upon this act of lodging the Counter-case, how the arbitrators will regard our position after that action. May had arrived before an answer was received to Lord Granville's long, explanatory despatch; and the answer, when it did come, was unsatisfactory: the

American Government refused to yield that without the concession of which it was impossible that we could consent to the further progress of arbitration. This, be it remarked, was the second refusal of America to recede from the position which she had taken up in reference to the indirect claims. But the terror of the English Government now was having to answer for their own mismanagement when the Treaty should fail, as it seemed likely to do; and to undo as far as possible the effect of their blunders was of so much importance to them, that not two nor twenty refusals, no thought of dignity or decency, could be likely to make them desist from wild, gasping, desperate efforts to induce America yet to take pity on them, and to make a concession sufficient to enable them to proceed with the arbitration without incurring the wrath of their country. Again we point out that America, the country claiming compensation for alleged injury, was perfectly cool and patient about this matter. England it was, the country from which damages was expected, that was so anxious to have the Claims against her brought to a hearing—or rather it was the English Ministers, terrified at the possible consequences to themselves of their own imbecility, whose danger stern America was implored to avert. And their danger was pressing; for Parliament, on hearing officially of this second refusal, was likely to take such action as would effectually stop all further empirical practice: it would occupy a longer time than they could possibly obtain from the country to correspond further in the usual manner: and Earl Russell held over them *in terrorem* a motion for an Address to the Crown, which he had already

postponed more than once, and which they themselves chose to regard as a vote of censure. They were not going to incur censure, however, if they could save themselves by any importunity, by any humiliation, by clutching at any straw which only looked like a support. True, the mail-bags could not avail them, but then there was the electric telegraph,* not the very clearest or safest medium of communication, where the subject-matter was intricate and delicate in character, and where want of clearness had already perplexed matters so cruelly. The telegraph was the only hope of the well-nigh beaten gamesters, and it procured for them, at the least, a few days more of Ministerial life. At the same time when they confessed the unsatisfactory character of the written despatch, they announced the dawn of a new hope flashed to them by the wire, and on this representation obtained a respite of a week, at the end of which time they undertook to make the British Parliament in some degree cognisant of the manner in which they had been dealing with the interests of the British Empire. A terrible week it must have been. The alternative gleams of hope, and heart-sicknesses from hope destroyed, must in themselves have been an agonising experience. A stand-point almost gained one day; relapse into the depths of despair the next; another venture for life—a grasp of a treacherous rope which parts and shows ruin to be imminent; a faint promise again—a promise that deceives, and so the week wears away, showing, when half of it has passed, not a spark or chance of safety.* But the struggle is for life. Start something new; offer anything you dare to fend off an absolute point-blank refusal; keep

* A grave and dignified manner of discussing and coming to an agreement on a question of immense national importance!!

the fluid moving, the wires will take no harm;—ye gods! is there no escape? Sunday morning, and no acceptance. To-morrow we must make our confession; and if they answer us not to-day, keeping hope alive, we perish. And now hour after hour is gathered into the past, and still no comfort. Nay, they will, they must, send a respite; we won't perish; a few minutes will suffice for a message, and hope is not extinct, though it has sunk very low. There, wasn't that a messenger? No; but there must be one on his way. Why does he loiter? Don't hint that there will be no message. We'll not believe such thing, whoever says so. Heavens, this is torture! Sister Anne, sister Anne, do you see any messenger coming? What—none! look again. There strikes another hour. A postman! how you have made our hearts flutter! Why didn't you make sure that it wasn't a telegraph messenger before you spoke? This cannot last much longer,—only a mere span of time now. Oh, look out with all your eyes, sister Anne, sister Anne! Well, the deliverance—the respite rather—came in true melodramatic fashion just as the last flicker of hope was dying. On Sunday arrived a message, saying that a proposal, invented in America, but which England had been desired to put forward—a proposal which, if accepted, would cure the blunders of the Treaty, would be submitted for consideration of the Senate. Hurrah! hurrah! The Senate will take at least a week to decide, and thus we secure another week's life, and while there's life there's hope. It is greatly to be wished that the Senate's decision may be favourable to the Supplemental Treaty; but it would seem that we must not feel secure of any such result. The President (perhaps to rid himself of our Cabinet's importunate solici-

tions) has turned the matter over to the Senate without committing himself to any opinion regarding it. He is at liberty hereafter to take any course concerning it. The Senate may for many reasons not favour its adoption and may not ultimately adopt it; but whatever their decision may be, it is not unlikely that they will address themselves with great deliberation to the discussion, without regard for, or perhaps enjoying, the palpitations of the culprits who tremble on this side the Atlantic. Even if the Senate passes the Article, we shall not necessarily (as we learn from the 'Times' of 17th May) obtain all that we have been so long contending for—namely, the withdrawal, without which the nation has determined not to go before the arbitrators. The President will by it be barred from making indirect claims, but he will not be bound to withdraw the indirect claims which he has already made, and of which the arbitrators are seized. So that an address from both Houses may be required notwithstanding the Senate's acceptance of the Supplementary Article, and we may have to withdraw from the Treaty whatever the action of the Senate may be. One might reasonably have expected that an amendment intended to correct former negligence would not itself have lain open to the charge of negligence—would not have been conceived in nervous haste, and would have been communicated with a little more form and precision than by a telegraphic message, lest the remedy should prove worse than the disease!

Ministers have taken the trouble to inform us that if they succeed—succeed, that is, in getting the approval of the Senate to their Supplemental Article—they will take no credit for the success. Surely this is an excess of modesty. Before we talk of giving or taking credit we

should be quite sure that credit attaches anywhere to the transaction. If you were to swing another man over an abyss, hold him for a time suspended there, and finally, after desperate effort, get him back to *terra firma*, would he be more inclined to give you credit for the deliverance or to call you to account for having placed him in jeopardy? The mention of credit was a mere oratorical device to turn men's thoughts from the excess of *dis-credit* which is really due to the mismanagement of the whole business. Credit! why, the mere mention of it is unparalleled audacity. Is Lord Granville so fond as to imagine that the whole of this agglomeration of blunders and weaknesses will not be jealously sifted? Does he imagine that, even if at the last we should be rescued "so as by fire," we will forget the peril into which we have been led, and the manner in which our honour has been disregarded? He cannot believe anything of the sort. Rather he acts, like King Agag, the part of "coming delicately," and makes believe that he thinks the bitterness of death is past, while he knows that a righteous sentence has gone forth against him and his colleagues. There will be a day of reckoning, never fear.

Lord Granville has said that the spirit of patience and fairness with which the American people has regarded the whole question of these indirect claims is "the first-fruit of the Treaty of Washington." How it can be so we are at a loss to understand. We suppose that this opinion of the substantial classes, this awakening of a national opinion as distinct from the cries of the rowdies and stump-orators, is the product of time and cultivation, not a result which can possibly have been suddenly brought about by any solitary act. America has begun to entertain public questions as we entertain

them here. An intelligent opinion, whether in America or in England, would surely regard this Treaty in the same light. It is to benefit America more than it is to benefit England; what marvel, then, if America wishes well to it? Nobody ever supposed that she was slow to perceive what would benefit herself. Lord Granville pays but a sorry compliment to the country which he is so anxious to propitiate when he insinuates that it is not a higher standard of feeling in America, but the soft-sawdery and obsequiousness of himself and his colleagues which has caused our objections to the American case to be so patiently received and so impartially considered. But supposing Lord Granville to be right, and that a reasonable view of our objections was procured by much flattery and deference, by inserting in the Treaty whatever the other side desired, by suppressing the claims which we had a right to make, and by leaving an opening for America to demand consequential damages—is this anything for a British statesman to brag of? Is the propitiation of the United States the sole object for which we exist, and are we to put our own honour and advantage wholly aside?

The fact that America has dealt with this question in a spirit very different from that which has formerly distinguished her in controversies with Great Britain, we gladly recognise. From the time when this better feeling was first apparent, we have hailed it as of more importance than the stupid Treaty or any disputed question. It is destined to have its effect not only upon the two nations but upon the world at large.

Being about to lay down the pen, we learn that Mr G. Hardy, in addressing the Conservatives of Canterbury, has expressed a hope that, when the change of Government takes place, moderate Liberals

may be found willing to support a Conservative Ministry. We trust that this hope may be well founded. Moderate Liberals must perceive by this time that to maintain Mr Gladstone in office is not the way to forward Liberal or any other measures; it is the way to insure a dead-lock. If the business of the country is to be proceeded with at all, a Ministry capable of creditably managing our foreign affairs, and of controlling their own party, must be in office. The sections into which the Gladstone Government has split up the Ministerial side of the House of Commons will neutralise each other, unless some of them attach themselves to a great party. There is, properly speaking, no Liberal party at present, and it would therefore appear to be the duty of those who do not very greatly differ from us in opinion to give the Conservative party their support. Mr Hardy's speech reads as if he foresees a not very distant accession of a new Government to power. He is evidently taking measure of the party's possible strength. Whether the Conservatives are to govern, or whether it may be their duty to "work and wait" a little longer, we have every reason to congratulate ourselves on the check which destructive policy has received, and on the commanding position which the Opposition, of which Mr Hardy is a worthy and powerful leader, occupies. We may be told, however, that though this is very fine reasoning, we are leaving completely out of sight the Cabinet's power of referring the whole case to the constituencies. To which we reply, that it would be absurd for the Prime Minister to appeal to the people again. They would ask him to account for the majority which they gave him at the end of 1868, and what answer could he make? Even if he were not guilty of the loss of this majority, we know not on what plea he could call on the country to

support him. The constituents must see and feel by this time that he has unsettled everything and settled nothing. When it is simply pulling down that he is engaged in, his energy knows no bounds, and nothing is allowed to stand between him and the gratification of his will; witness the zeal with which he destroyed the Irish branch of the Church of England and disjoined the Army. But once he has razed and shattered, there is an end of his endeavour, and an end to anything like action for a distinct purpose. Bewildered in the ruin that he has made, he knows not how to make a step towards renewal or repair. If we were to be delivered from him now, it would take ten years of reconstructive government to heal the breaches that he has made to re-establish what he has unsettled, and to remodel what he has disintegrated. He cannot claim the electors' confidence by reason of reduced expenditure, for the estimates are again as high as ever they were, and they are likely to be higher; neither can he ask it on account of able management of the Army or Navy; still less has he to gain from his foreign policy, by which we have been so humiliated. To dissolve would therefore be to him a useless and a damaging act: and although this consideration brings no security against his dissolving, yet, in the absence of evidence that he intends to go to the country, we assume that he will act reasonably. The Opposition seeks not to displace him for the present; and the probability therefore is, that he may continue for some months longer a Minister on sufferance, powerless to carry a measure or to resist attack. Every week brings out more strongly the correctness of our long-standing opinion that he is a failure. Every week the consciousness that he has been a great mistake becomes more and more disseminated among

the mass of the people. The remaining two months of the session may suffice to convince every one of his inability; and when once that conviction shall be established, the fear that he can ever again have power to harm us may be dismissed. He has broken down too notoriously and too generally for him ever to be again tolerated as a Minister. We have heard it whispered that this distinguished statesman intends voluntarily to withdraw his services from a people who have shown themselves unworthy of such a blessing. If so, as we have frequently pointed out the advantage to him and to us of such a step, of course we can only approve the resolution, regretting that he did not take our advice sooner. But if he should fortunately abandon the field of politics, what other field will he embellish by his presence? Old Mr Weller suggests that those philanthropists whom a cold and inappreciative world has driven into retirement have a leaning towards turnpikes, where, as he philosophically explains the proclivity, "They revenges themselves upon mankind by taking of tolls." But surely a higher vengeance than this remains open to a great mind that has been a Church's champion and a Church's destroyer—a people's

William and a people's scorn, who has in his time done more set talking than any hundred other persons that could be named, and who has exhibited a degree of incapacity in deeds such as nature does not accord to three men in a millennium. Some learned retreat would be preferable, whence he might launch chapters of autobiography and satires upon a world that is not worthy of him; and who knows but that in this line he might find the success for which he has angled all his life, and for which he has sacrificed consistency in vain?

Thus we have to note only the downward course and utter collapse of an aspirant who was

"The expectancy and rose of the fair state;"

who was to be himself *deliciæ humani generis*, and his rule a return to the Saturnian age! Alas for high pretensions! alas for the Art of Ruling made Easy! our regenerator is quite, quite down, and the sorrowing world must be shunted back into its well-worn grooves, and get on as it best may in the old work-a-day fashion. Heaven send that this break-down of the *integer vitæ scelerisque purus*, beget not in the community a liking for undisguised rascals!

P.S.—We go to press while the action of the Senate in regard to the Supplemental Treaty is still unknown, and while the opinion gains force among the public that the Supplemental Treaty, if it should be ratified, will not secure for us the withdrawal of the indirect claims. In this state of things Parliament is our only hope; Parliament may yet step in and save us. Without the interference of Parliament it seems certain that we shall drift—rather, we shall be lured by our Government—into the presence of the arbitrators with the whole American "Case" still to be replied to. But Parliament *will not* fail us.

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